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The A-Verse of the Alliterative Long Line

and the Metre of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

by

Noriko Inoue

A thesis submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Ph.D. in the Faculty of Arts, Department of English, September 2002.

94993 words

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to conduct a close and careful study of the metre of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and thereby to describe the metrical principles that underlie the structure of the unrhymed long line, especially, that of the a-verse, and to demonstrate the stylistic possibilities that individual poets could exploit on the basis of these principles.

In the introduction, I re-examine the three-stave half-line theory and point out the inconsistencies and unnecessary complexities that this theory entails, and argue for the regular two-stave verse and the potential disjunction between alliteration and stress.

Chapter I examines the lines with non-*aa/ax* patterns found in *Sir Gawain*, and considers whether the non-*aa/ax* alliterative patterns in this romance should be treated as 'irregular' and thus be assumed to require emendation.

Chapter II deals with the so-called 'extended' verses, and how stress and alliteration function in such half-lines; Chapter III investigates combinations of various syntactic units, mainly those of adjective + noun and verb + adverb, and presents general metrical 'rules' which appear to govern the 'extended' and non-'extended' a-verse; Chapter IV is aimed at the demonstration of these rules by examining the metrical function in the long line of doublet forms, such as *to/for to* + infinitive and *on/vpon folde*.

Chapter V presents a comparative study between the metre of *Sir Gawain* and that of *Cleanness* and *Patience*, the other alliterative poems found in the same manuscript, and three other alliterative poems, namely, *The Destruction of Troy*, *The Wars of Alexander*, and *St Erkenwald*.

Chapter VI explores how the alliterative metre can be exploited for stylistic purposes.

My conclusion summarises the metrical rules that have emerged from this study.

For my parents and James

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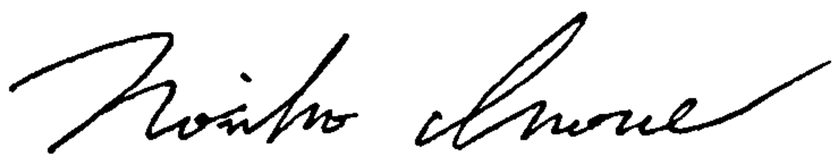
Thanks are due to Dr. Myra Stokes for her expert supervision and encouragement; to Prof. John Burrow, Dr. Ad Putter, Prof. Masako Hirai, Prof. Masaji Tajiri, and Prof. Yoko Wada for valuable scholarly encouragement; to Dipli Saikia, Yoko Toyama, John Hockley, Mutsuko Tajiri, my aunt and sister for their unfailing support and personal encouragement. My greatest debts are acknowledged in my dedication.

DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Bristol.

The dissertation has not been presented to any other University for examination either in the United Kingdom or overseas.



Noriko Inoue

6 September, 2002

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PREFACE

The major goal of this thesis is to investigate the underlying metrical principles that govern the structure of the unrhymed alliterative long line, especially, that of the a-verse. I accept H. N. Duggan's rules for the b-verse, and my findings presented in this thesis will provide much additional evidence in support of them. I would, however, question certain aspects of Duggan's position with regard to the a-verse, and hence propose a new orientation in the scholarship on the a-verse with the following claims, which will be thoroughly discussed and argued for in the present work:

1. The a-verse must have a pre-caesural stress, which *always* falls on the verse-final word whether it is of open or closed class, *unless* the verse-final word is so closely *syntactically* linked to the preceding one as to form a continuant of it (e.g. the second element of a nominal/verbal group) equivalent to the unstressed syllables succeeding the stressed syllable of a word;
2.
   (a) The a-verse, like the b-verse, has only *two* stresses; there are mechanisms for reducing three or four possible ictus positions to two;
   (b) The a-verse, like the b-verse, must have *one long dip*: if it is a 'crowded' a-verse (i.e. a verse with three or more possible ictus positions), a long dip must occur *between* the two words that bear ictus; if a standard one (i.e. one with only two possible ictus positions), it must, as in the b-verse, occur either before or after the first stress;
3.
   (a) Joan Turville-Petre has convincingly argued that the a-verse normally has an unstressed prelude at verse-opening; and an open-class word occurring at this position will often, in the crowded a-verse, be stress-subordinated and absorbed into this opening dip;
   (b) A disyllabic interval rhythm—or, what Joan Turville-Petre calls, the 'standard rhythm'—plays a decisive role in signalling, in the crowded a-verse, on which two words metrical ictus falls.

INTRODUCTION

It has been generally agreed that *Pearl*, *Cleanness* (or *Purity*), *Patience*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (henceforth *Sir Gawain*), all found in MS Cotton Nero A.x., were probably written by a single anonymous poet now called 'the *Gawain* poet.'[1] These poems survive only in this manuscript, where they have no titles. The titles by which they are now known were devised by Richard Morris and Sir Frederick Madden when they produced the first published edition of the poems in the nineteenth century. The date of the manuscript (not later than 1400[2]) and other internal evidence—such as architecture, armour, costumes, and some possible borrowings from other writings whose date of composition is known[3]—point to composition in the latter half of the fourteenth century.[4] The four poems are written in the same hand and in the same North-West Midlands dialect. They vary in genre: *Pearl* is a dream-poem, *Cleanness* and *Patience* biblical homilies, and *Sir Gawain* an Arthurian romance. They also differ in metrical form: *Pearl* is written in iambic tetrametre twelve-line stanzas, the stanzas themselves being linked by concatenation (verbal repetitions across last and first lines of stanzas); the other Cotton Nero poems are all written in the unrhymed

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[1] There is neither any conclusive proof of the common authorship of the four poems nor any decisive evidence as to order of composition; cumulative evidence, however, strongly supports common authorship. For the argument that some or all of the four poems in Cotton Nero poems are by different poets, see J. Clark, 'Observations on Certain Differences in Vocabulary between *Cleanness* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *Philological Quarterly* 28 (1949), 261-73; 'Paraphrases for "God" in the Poems Attributed to "the *Gawain*-Poet"', *Modern Language Notes* 65 (1950), 232-6; '"The *Gawain*-Poet" and the Substantival Adjective', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 49 (1950), 60-6; 'On Certain "Alliterative" and "Poetic" Words in the Poems Attributed to "the *Gawain*-Poet"', *Modern Language Quarterly* 12 (1951), 387-98; G. Kjellmer, *Did the 'Pearl'-Poet Write 'Pearl'?*, Gothenburg Studies in English 30 (1975); M. Tajima 'Additional Syntactic Evidence Against the Common Authorship of MS. Cotton Nero A.x', *English Studies* 59 (1978), 193-8; 'Authorship and Syntax: The Case of the Cotton Nero Poems' (in Japanese), in *The Language and Style of English Alliterative Poetry*, ed. E. Suzuki (Tokyo, 1989), 98-135. On other discussions of the common authorship, see M. W. Bloomfield, '*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*: An Appraisal', *PMLA* 76 (1961), 7-19; W. Vantuono, '*Patience*, *Cleanness*, *Pearl*, and *Gawain*: the Case for Common Authorship', *Annuale Mediaevale* 12 (1971), 393-405; W. B. McColly and D. Weier, 'Literary Attribution Likelihood Ratio Test: the Case of the Middle English *Pearl*-Poems', *Computers and the Humanities* 17 (1983), 65-75; W. B. McColly, 'Style and Structure in the Middle English Poem *Cleanness*', *Computers and the Humanities* 21 (1987), 169-76; R. A. Cooper and D. A. Pearsall, 'The *Gawain*-Poems: a Statistical Approach to the Question of Common Authorship', *Review of English Studies*, ns. 39 (1988), 365-86; A. C. Spearing, *The Gawain-Poet: A Critical Study* (Cambridge, 1970), 32-40.

[2] C. E. Wright, *English Vernacular Hands from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Centuries* (Oxford, 1960), 15.

[3] For instance, the poet is said (by J. J. Anderson) to have drawn upon *Mandeville's Travels*, which was written in 1357; see his edition of *Cleanness* (Manchester, 1977), 1.

[4] E. V. Gordon suggests 1360-95 in his edition of *Pearl* (p. xliv), and he is followed by A. C. Spearing (*The Gawain-Poet: A Critical* Study, 2).

alliterative long line, but these lines are, in *Sir Gawain*, divided into stanza-like paragraphs of irregular length, each being concluded by the bob and wheel—the five short rhymed lines.

Much work has been done on such aspects as the structure, themes, and language of this oeuvre. Alliterative metre is also now attracting considerable attention. The first extensive study of Middle English alliterative poetry was by J. P. Oakden in his *Alliterative Poetry in Middle English*, published in the 1930s. Although his data collected from various alliterative poems are vitiated by his somewhat inconsistent scansion, his descriptive account of a variety of alliterative practices is still valuable. In the 1970s, alliterative metre was studied, with particular attention to *Sir Gawain*, by scholars such as Marie Borroff, Joan Turville-Petre, and Thorlac Turville-Petre.[5] Yet it is in the last decade or so that understanding of the alliterative metre has been dramatically increased, by the studies of such scholars as Thomas Cable, David Lawton, A. T. E. Matonis, and, signally, Hoyt. N. Duggan.[6] Duggan and Cable independently demonstrated that the rules of alliterative metre were in fact much stricter than had been thought.

Duggan has studied the syntax and metre of almost 13,000 lines taken from fifteen unrhymed long-line poems,[7] and formulated metrical rules which cover various aspects of alliterative metre: alliterative patterning, the distribution of stressed and unstressed syllables, structural (in)significance of the caesura, etc. He argues, for instance, that

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[5] M. Borroff, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: A Stylistic and Metrical Study* (New Haven, 1962); J. Turville-Petre, 'The Metre of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *English Studies* 57 (1976), 310-28; T. Turville-Petre, *The Alliterative Revival* (Cambridge, 1977), 48-68; 'Emendation on Grounds of Alliteration in *The Wars of Alexander*', *English Studies* 61 (1980), 302-17; 'Editing *The Wars of Alexander*', in *Manuscripts and Texts: Editorial Problems in Later Middle English Literature*, ed. D. Pearsall (Cambridge, 1987), 143-60; 'The Author of *The Destruction of Troy*', *Medium Ævum* 57 (1988), 264-9.

[6] T. Cable, *The English Alliterative Tradition* (Philadelphia, 1991); D. Lawton, 'Larger Patterns of Syntax in Middle English Unrhymed Alliterative Verse', *Neophilologus* 64 (1980), 604-18; 'The Unity of Middle English Alliterative Poetry', *Speculum* 58 (1983), 72-94; 'Alliterative Style', *A Companion to Piers Plowman*, ed. J. A. Alford (Berkeley, 1988), 223-49; 'The Diversity of Middle English Alliterative Poetry', *Leeds Studies in English* 20 (1989), 143-72; 'The Idea of Alliterative Poetry: Alliterative Meter and *Piers Plowman*', *'Such Werkis to Werche': Essays on Piers Plowman in Honor of David C. Fowler*, ed. M. F. Vaughan (1993, East Lansing), 147-68; A. T. E. Matonis, 'A Reexamination of the Middle English Alliterative Long Line', *Modern Philology* 81 (1984), 339-60; 'Non-*Aa/ax* Patterns in Middle English Alliterative Long-Line Verse', *English Historical Metrics*, eds. C. B. McCully and J. J. Anderson (Cambridge, 1997), 134-149; H. N. Duggan, 'Alliterative Patterning as a Basis for Emendation in Middle English Alliterative Poetry', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 8 (1986), 73-105; 'The Shape of the B-Verse in Middle English Alliterative Poetry', *Speculum* 61 (1986), 564-92; 'Meter, Stanza, Vocabulary, Dialect', in *A Companion to The Gawain-Poet*, ed. Derek Brewer (Cambridge, 1997), 221-42; 'Extended A-Verses in Middle English Alliterative Poetry', *Parergon*, ns., vol. 18, no.1 (2000), 75.

[7] He excludes such atypical texts (assumed to be early) as *Joseph of Arimathea* and *William of Palerne*, but includes *Piers Plowman*; for a full account of his corpus, see Duggan, 'Alliterative Patterning', 76-7.

the *aa/ax* pattern (in which *a* represents an alliterating stave, *x* a non-alliterating stave, and / the caesura) is a rule strictly observed in all the poems written in the classical unrhymed alliterative line (except *Piers Plowman* and *Piers the Ploughman's Crede*), and that the only exception to this rule is the pattern *aa/aa* occurring in a line which alliterates on vowels.[8] Now that his b-verse (the second half of the line) rules (discovered independently by Thomas Cable) are gaining acceptance,[9] it is the more imperative to examine the metrical structure of the a-verse (the first half of the line), especially the so-called 'extended' a-verses with three or more potential stresses.[10] Marie Borroff is one of the most influential of the scholars who argue for stress-subordination in such a-verses: 'it is my belief that there are in fact no extended lines in *Gawain*, if by an extended line is meant one containing five chief syllables of equal rank'.[11] However, she does not seem to formulate any well-defined subordination rules; she appears to subordinate the word that has least semantic weight. J. Turville-Petre, who explores the relationship between syntax and metre in *Sir Gawain*,[12] convincingly argues that the predominant rhythmic pattern in the poem is in triple time, that is, a disyllabic interval between the two staves of the half-line (though she uses the term 'accents' instead of 'staves') and that this prevailing rhythm, which she calls 'standard rhythm', sometimes alternates with a short-interval rhythm, a monosyllabic or no interval between the two staves. Thus she does not at any point assume the possibility of three-stress (or three-stave) a-verses, arguing that verses with three main constituents 'come within the capacity of standard'.[13] She justly suggests that the 'rhythmic "pull"' of the two salient points in a half-line is strong enough for a major component occurring between the two staves or before the first stave to be rhythmically subordinated to the two other metrical heaves.[14] In his *Alliterative Revival*, T. Turville-Petre also advocates the two-stave verse,[15] arguing that a heavy syllable at the

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[8] Cf.: 'in the classical corpus of unrhymed alliterative verse—which for reasons too complex to outline here does not include *Piers Plowman* and *Piers the Ploughman's Crede*—the poets wrote exclusively in the alliterative pattern *aa/ax*. The single ordered exception to that rule appears to be that when alliteration is vocalic the pattern *aa/aa* appears' ('Alliterative Patterning', 77).

[9] For his b-verse rules, see p. 5 below.

[10] I use the terms, *stress* (unless specified as 'linguistic stress', etc.), *stave*, and *ictus* interchangeably for *metrically* stressed syllables, whether they are accompanied by alliteration or not.

[11] Borroff, 198.

[12] J. Turville-Petre, 310-28.

[13] *Op. cit.*, 320.

[14] *Op. cit.*, 320.

[15] 'A thorough analysis of "extended" half-lines in *Gawain* seems to show that it is always possible to subordinate one of the alliterating syllables without distorting the rhythms inherent in the language' (T. Turville-Petre, *The Alliterative Revival*, 54).

verse-opening position[16] can be assimilated into the unstressed prelude.[17] But after his editorial work with Duggan on *The Wars of Alexander*, he seems to have changed his stance and later stated that a-verses can have three staves with equal emphasis, though he still seems to hold the view that one of the stresses can, in some cases, be subordinated.[18]

Recent scholars appear to have moved away from the position represented especially by Borroff and J. Turville-Petre. Editors usually express views on the 'extended' lines, though often in a cursory manner, and the majority of them basically share the view that, although a-verses characteristically have a two-stress structure, they can, in some cases, have three stresses. It thus seems that the three-stave a-verse theory has been gaining more currency (especially though not exclusively after Duggan formulated his metrical rules in the late 80s), though with slight differences of emphasis. Norman Davis, while accepting three-stave a-verses, tentatively suggests the possibility of stress subordination: 'some poets, of whom the author of *Gawain* was one, often used three lifts in the first half-line—though the third need not be of exactly the same prominence as the other two'.[19] Derek Pearsall takes a similar stance. He points out that 'there is no basis for the assumption...that the number of stresses will correspond to the number of alliterating words, that a three-stave *a*-line, for instance, is necessarily an "extended" metrical form'.[20] He thus seems to encourage one to view a line as having a regular four-beat rhythm, but he does not rule out three-stave a-verses: 'three-stress *a*-lines do seem to be admitted by some poets as a deliberate metrical variant, on the same principle that Dryden introduces alexandrines among his heroic couplets'.[21] J. J. Anderson also accepts a-verses with three staves, simply saying, '"Extended" first half-lines, containing three stressed syllables instead of two, are common'.[22] Stephanie Trigg similarly holds the view that a-verses can have three staves, though she suggests

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[16] In my thesis, I use the term, 'verse-opening', to refer to the unstressed position before the initial stress in a half-line, particularly, in the a-verse. As I shall demonstrate in the subsequent chapters, three positions—i.e. verse-opening, pre-caesural, line-ending—are particularly important ones in the metrical structure of the long line, and play a crucial role in determining the rhythmic shapes of the a- and b-verses.

[17] 'As a general rule the first half-line has an unstressed "prelude" before the initial stress. This remains unstressed, even though, as will be seen later, it may sometimes consist of a number of syllables and contain words of great semantic weight in the sentence' (*Op. cit.*, 54).

[18] T. Turville-Petre, *Alliterative Poetry of the Later Middle Ages: An Anthology* (London, 1989), 6.

[19] *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, edited by J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon, revised by N. Davis (Oxford, 1967), 149.

[20] D. Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry* (London, 1977), 161.

[21] *Op. cit.*, 160

[22] J. J. Anderson, ed., *Cleanness* (Manchester, 1977), 112.

that 'the poet can also vary the degree of stress'.[23] J. A. Burrow and Thorlac Turville-Petre appear to take a similar view in their *Book of Middle English.*[24]

Duggan's stance regarding 'extended' lines is reflected in his use of the term without inverted commas: 'there are substantial numbers of extended *a*- verses with three metrical prominences'.[25] He thus denies the existence of a fixed number of stresses in the a-verse, and his current position concerning the metrical structure of the a-verse is most clearly represented by the following statement: 'I doubt that precise metrical rules of the sort we have adduced for alliterative patterning or the rhythmic structure of the b-verse will be possible in characterizing the a-verse'.[26] This scepticism led him to the following—in my opinion misleading—remark regarding the overall metrical structure of the alliterative poems: 'it is evident that if metrical systems must be defined in terms of "a regular and recurrent pattern in a literary composition," then Middle English alliterative poems are not metrical'.[27]

Paradoxically, however, it is *Duggan himself* who has demonstrated, convincingly, that all the poets composing in the classical unrhymed alliterative long lines wrote b-verses governed by rules which were much stricter than had ever been assumed, and therefore that alliterative metre is as regularly patterned as its iambic counterpart. He argues that only a limited set of b-verse rhythms are metrically acceptable:

xx(x)(x)/(x)/(x) or (x)/xx(x)(x)/(x) [in which *x* represents an unstressed syllable, / a stressed syllable, and brackets an optional item].[28] If any b-verse invariably has two stresses with one and only one long dip (i.e. a dip of two or more unstressed syllables) either before or after the head stave, then does it not follow that the b-verse, at least, is metrical in the strict sense of having more or less predictable and patterned rhythms, and therefore as rule-governed in its way—though ruled differently—as iambics? And if the second half-line has a distinct metre, there would be every reason to suppose that the first half-line may also be governed by similar—though not necessarily identical—metrical principles. In fact, a major objection to his theory is the sudden mid-line introduction of rules—on number of stresses, and of length of dip between them—which apparently do not apply to the first half-line. A similar objection is raised by D. Lawton:

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[23] S. Trigg, ed., *Wynnere and Wastoure*, EETS os 297 (Oxford, 1990), xxxi.
[24] J. A. Burrow and Thorlac Turville-Petre, *A Book of Middle English*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1997), 60.
[25] Duggan, 'Alliterative Patterning', 77.
[26] Duggan, 'Extended A-Verses', 75.
[27] *Op. cit.*, 75.
[28] Duggan, 'Stress Assignment in Middle English Alliterative Poetry', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* lxxxix (1990), 311. He regards x/x/(x) as metrical only in a certain syntactic environment.

Duggan's work so far relates almost entirely to b-verses, and provides little help with a-verses. This is not a fault, but it might be expected to operate as a check on the claims Duggan makes for the universality and scope of his conclusions. Particularly, it is inherently strange that in this account a-verses and b-verses operate differently. According to Duggan, b-verses are syllable-counted and a-verses are not. The disparity requires to be analyzed and conceptualized further.[29]

Duggan's failure to find any metrical regularity in the a-verse is, I think, due to the following two misconceptions: (1) the universal application to all the alliterative poems of his rules regarding alliterative patterning; (2) the conflation of metrical with linguistic stress and his resulting inconsistent adoption of the three-stave (or even four-stave) theory.

Duggan stipulates that any a-verse must have, at least, two alliterating words accompanied by stress, and therefore verses with non-*aa* (*a* representing an alliterating stress) alliterative patterns are, in every case, unauthentic. Duggan therefore simply rejects the notion, proposed by Borroff, that a-verses had only two metrical stresses and that extra open-class words with some linguistic stress were always subordinated, on the grounds that her analysis produces non-*aa* a-verses, which he regards as metrically not permissible. For instance, Borroff scans the following line (from *Sir Gawain*) as *a(a)x/ax* (in which an item in brackets represents a subordinated word),[30] thus subordinating the second alliterating open-class word and giving the second metrical stress to the non-alliterating pre-caesural word:

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[29] Lawton, 'The Idea of Alliterative Poetry', 158. Regarding the possibility of three-stave a-verses, however, Lawton seems to support Duggan's position.

[30] The annotation is my own; Borroff, applying such concepts as 'major/minor chief syllable (represented below by C or c)' and 'major/minor emphasis' to her scansion, annotates the line as

C c C C C
With roȝe raged mosse rayled ay-where.

She regards 'raged' as a minor chief syllable, subordinate to 'roȝe' and 'mosse': 'The alliterative pattern, expressed according to Oakden's formulation, is *aax/ax*, the second alliterating syllable bearing minor emphasis' (194). Though I think her distinction between primary and secondary stresses unnecessary, she perceptively points out the possible disjunction between alliteration and metrical stress: 'If *raged* is subordinated to *roȝe* and *mosse*, as is here proposed, major emphasis and alliteration do not coincide' (194); for my own emphasis on the need to distinguish between metrical stress (*or* ictus) and linguistic stress, see also n. 69 on pp. 17-8 below.

a (a) x a x
With roȝe raged mosse rayled aywhere (*SG* 745)

But Duggan would scan this as *aax/ax* without subordination, for his metrical rules require any a-verse to have at least two alliterating staves. He therefore remarks in his most recent article that, 'since the a-verse alliterative patterns AX and XA are not metrical, the point of Borroff's arguments for distinguishing major chief syllables from minor chief syllables and separating stress from alliteration is blunted'.[31] Thus his argument against the two-stave theory is based on his assumption: (1) that *ax/ax* (or *xa/ax*) lines are not metrically permissible, and, where they occur in the manuscript, are inauthentic or scribal; and (2) that metrically significant alliteration and metrical stress must coincide. His case would require re-examination if the pattern were seen to be authorial in *Sir Gawain*.

Verses with the non-*aa/ax* pattern cannot be proved unauthentic merely by their apparent irregularity in alliterative patterning; on the contrary, there is cumulative evidence for the authenticity of these lines: (1) the spelling of the works of the Cotton Nero manuscript accurately reflects metre in other respects:[32] (a) 95% of the b-verses follow Duggan's rhythmic rules;[33] (b) the spelling seldom obscures the basically iambic metre of the bob and wheel; (2) the bob and wheel serves to divide the poem into stanza-like paragraphs, and in alliterative stanzaic poems (e.g. *The Awntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyne*),[34] non-standard alliterative patterns like those observable in this poem are not infrequent; (3) non-standard alliterative patterns in *Sir Gawain* occur much more frequently than in other alliterative works.[35] Some scholars argue that

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[31] 'Extended A-Verses', 71; cf.: 'my discovery that the alliterative patterns accepted by late medieval alliterative poets were far more restrictive than Borroff took them to be essentially vitiates her argument that words carrying alliteration and potential stress were subordinated to words lacking alliteration' ('Extended A-Verses', 71). He does not mention J. Turville-Petre, who also assumes a consistently four-stressed line in her analysis of the metre of *Sir Gawain*, though he elsewhere commends her article, saying it is a 'brilliant essay' on the relationship between syntax and metre of the poem ('The Shape of the B-Verse', 564).

[32] See also A. Putter and M. Stokes, 'Spelling, Grammar and Metre in the Works of the *Gawain*-poet', *Parergon*, ns., vol. 18, no.1 (2000), 77-96.

[33] For discussion on the b-verses in *Sir Gawain*, *Cleanness*, *Patience*, and *St Erkenwald*, see 5.9 below.

[34] For the argument that the rhymed stanzaic alliterative long line is written to the same b-verse rules that governed poets who wrote the unrhymed alliterative line, see Duggan, 'The Shape of the B-Verse', 578; Ruth Kennedy, 'New Theories of Constraint in the Metricality of the Strong-Stress Long Line, Applied to the English Rhymed Alliterative Corpus, c1400', in *Métriques du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance*, ed. D. Billy and M. Domincy (Paris, 1999), 131-44.

[35] For full discussion on non-*aa/ax* patterns in *Sir Gawain*, see Chapter I; for those in my other control texts (i.e. *Cleanness*, *Patience*, *St Erkenwald*, *The Destruction of Troy*, and *The Wars of Alexander*), see 5.1 below.

syntactic transposition can always restore the irregular *xa* pattern (in the b-verse) into the standard *ax*. However, at *SG* 399:

I wot neuer where þou wonyes bi hym þat me wro3t,

the b-verse has the *xa* pattern, but no transposition readily suggests itself;[36] while, at *SG* 953—

Rugh ronkled chekez þat oþer on rolled

—transposition is possible, but it seems unlikely that the scribe transformed a line with a natural word order into one with a more unusual order.[37] It remains possible, but highly unlikely, that the scribe disrupted only the alliteration, while preserving the spelling which accurately reflects the b-verse rhythm and the iambic metre of the bob and wheel. But it is more likely that number of stresses rather than the strict alliterative pattern *aa/ax* functions as the underlying metrical principle.

Duggan's rejection of the 4-stress line as a metrical invariable derives also from his conflation of metrical with 'linguistic' stress,[38] and his resulting inconsistent adoption of the three-stave (or even four-stave) theory to account for the a-verse structure. His 'stress' is given to syllables which have lexical and/or phrasal stress. Even Borroff, while perceptively suggesting the possibility of disjunction between metrical stress and alliteration, assigns 'secondary stress' to words which are metrically subordinated, but which have lexical/phrasal stress and, in some cases, even alliterate. But linguistic concepts of 'primary stress' and 'secondary stress' have not place in the analysis of metrical structure. As T. Turville-Petre rightly argues, linguistic stress should be distinguished from metrical *ictus*.[39] I am not denying the presence of linguistic stress on syllables with, what Borroff calls, 'secondary stress'; they will be heard (actually or mentally) with a variable degree of linguistic stress. As T. Turville-Petre points out, the syllables of a metrical line would, in actual performance, gain 'innumerable

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[36] See also 155, 547, 1115, 1193; I examine lines with *aa/xa* and its variant patterns in Chapter I below.

[37] See also 983, 1835. Lawton also argues for the authenticity of the *aa/xa* pattern in *Sir Gawain*, saying that it is 'just the pattern to show some influence from poetry with end-rhyme' ('The Idea', 163); see also his discussion in 'The Unity', 72-94; and 'The Diversity', 143-72. Matonis also defends some of the lines with this alliterative pattern: see 'A Reexamination', 339-60; and 'Non-*Aa/ax* Patterns', 134-149. Many of Matonis's observations are pertinent and just, though she does not seem to question (as I do) the concept of 'extended' a-verses.

[38] By 'linguistic' stress, I mean lexical and/or phrasal (or sentence) stress.

gradations of emphasis'.[40] But *in metrical analysis*, syllables can be treated only as either stressed or unstressed.[41] Metrical ictus, therefore, must be distinguished from linguistic stress. This is also demonstrated by the fact that both can occur in disjunction in one verse, as, for instance, in such lines as the following from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*:

× / × / × / × / × /
A dronke man woot wel he hath an hous,

× / × / × / × / × / ×
But he *noot* which the righte wey is thider,

× / × / × / × / × / ×
And to a dronke man the wey is slider. (CT. I, 1262-4)

Line 1263 can be read with regular iambic ictus, *and* with linguistic stress on 'noot'. Therefore, there is no call for the linguistic concepts of 'primary stress' and 'secondary stress' in the analysis of metrical structure, and linguistic stress and metrical ictus should be treated as two different phenomena (which usually co-occur, but do not *necessarily* do so).

The conflation of linguistic stress and metrical ictus results in Duggan's inconsistent handling of (both a- and b-) verses with three or more open-class words. He discusses such b-verses in some detail in one of his articles, where he inclines, while entertaining the 'possibility' of three-stave b-verses, to reject such b-verses in his concluding remark: 'the possibility...that the poets' metrics included three-lift b-verses was considered and tentatively rejected'.[42] Though he later suggests the possibility of such b-verses, he has not so far attempted to demonstrate any.[43] Thus, in accordance with his b-verse rules, for example, he invokes stress-subordination for his scansion of the following lines:[44]

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[39] T. Turville-Petre, *The Alliterative Revival*, 55.
[40] *Op. cit.*, 55: 'Naturally enough, *in performance* the syllables of a line of verse will receive innumerable gradations of emphasis; but the *metrical structure* remains unaffected'.
[41] Cf.: 'In strict prosodic terms there are only two grades of syllable, stressed and unstressed. This is a conceptual pattern of relationship, perceived in the mind rather than heard by the ear' (*Op. cit.*, 55).
[42] Duggan, 'The Authenticity of the Z-Text of *Piers Plowman*: Further Notes on Metrical Evidence', *Medium Aevum* 56 (1987), 39.
[43] 'I have come to think that some b-verses in fact have three metrically stressed positions...Presentation of the full evidence and argument on the question of three-stressed b-verses must await another occasion' ('Langland's Dialect and Final *-e*', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 12 (1990), 172, n. 36).
[44] Duggan, 'The Authenticity', 34.

... 3oure clere golde to wyn /k/[45](*WA* 1892)

... of þe worthy kyng Priam /w/ (*DT* 9068)

... foure score wyntir /f/ (*Mum* 252)

He points out in his discussion of the b-verse that nouns like *king*, *man*, *saint*, *god*, *queen*, *gold* 'tend not to take alliteration when they appear with a qualifier',[46] and that those nouns, together with numerals and count and time words like *day*, *month*, *year*, *terme*, *score*, *cubit(s)*, 'show a marked tendency to lose expected stress'.[47] He thus treats the adjective + noun combinations in the b-verses above as constituting a single metrical unit, occupying only one stave and with stress falling (in these cases) on the alliterating adjectives. I am convinced that his treatment of such b-verses with three possible ictus positions was quite right, and that his later inclination to admit the possibility of a three-stave b-verse simply obscures the metrical principles of the b-verse.

However, Duggan seems to allow this license only for those combinations occurring at the head stave of the b-verse. He does not treat as a single metrical unit all the combinations of adjective + noun co-occurring in the same verse with another open-class word; instead, he suggests (or appears to suggest) metrical stress for each element of the combination when it occurs at line-ending or in the a-verse. This inconsistency creates unnecessary difficulty for him. For instance, in the following b-verses, he says it is difficult to know where stress falls:[48]

... to lay a lel date /l/ (*C* 425)

... and couthe of courte thewes /k/ (*Mum* 21)

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[45] The letter between slashes represents the alliterative sound in the line; in this, I have followed Duggan's practice. *WA* represents *The Wars of Alexander*, *DT The Destruction of Troy*, *Mum Mum and the Sothsegger*.

[46] Duggan, 'The Authenticity', 33-4.

[47] See also 'Final *–e* and the Rhythmic Structure of the B-Verse in Middle English Alliterative Poetry', *Modern Philology* (1988), 133: 'The nouns *man*, *men*, and *kyng* are normally stress subordinated in b-verses when accompanied by an adjective. . . '

[48] Duggan, 'The Authenticity', 35-6: 'Determining which of these elements is stress-subordinated is a difficult and, I fear, somewhat arbitrary process.'

... Bere-no-false-witnesse	/b/ (*Piers Plowman*, ed. Bennett, B.v.589)
... and stirre no fote ferrere	/st/ (*P3A* 47)[49]
... foure & twenti thousand	/f/ (*WA* 3738)
... to tell of þa trees kinde	/t/ (*WA* 4767)
...& schoke hire schire leues	/š/ (*WA* 5018)
... stode full of stith reedis	/st/ (*WA* 5461)

Interestingly enough, all the examples cited involve line-terminal adjective + noun combinations (except *P3A* 47).[50] If an adjective + noun combination is treated as one stave in these b-verses, their stress-position is obvious: it is certain that the non-alliterating noun occupies the last stave (since the b-verse can have only one unstressed syllable after the last stave), while the head stave is occupied by the first alliterating open-class word (i.e. 'lay', 'tell', etc.). These lines thus happen to serve as strong evidence that an alliterating open-class word can, in certain metrical and syntactic environments, be 'destaved' and given no metrical stress, though it still retains a degree of *linguistic* stress. His inconsistency regarding the adjective + noun combination is also observable in his three-stress scansion of a-verses with such combinations:[51]

Hufes thare with hale strenghe...	(*MA* 1260)
There come in at þe fyrst course...	(*MA* 176)
And haldeȝ out on est half...	(*P* 434)
And lepis vpe one the lefte syde...	(*P3A* 240)
Þer hales in at þe halle dor...	(*SGGK* 136)
Ferkis furth with a fewe folk...	(*WA* 1049)

The argument he presents here exposes one of the most serious drawbacks involved in his metrical theory, which assumes the possibility of three-stave verses. He takes stress to fall on verbs, adjectives, and nouns, and subordinates medial adverbs such as

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[49] *P3A* represents *The Parlement of the Thre Ages*.

[50] I treat genitive + noun (i.e. *WA* 4767) as a variant of adjective + noun; for full discussion on adjective + noun combinations and their variants, see 3.1 and 5.5 below.

[51] Duggan, 'Notes toward a Theory of Langland's Meter', *The Yearbook of Langland Studies*, vol. 1 (1987), 68. The last four examples are quoted again in his 'Extended A-Verses', where Duggan, together with *MA* 176 (which I list here), argues, once again, for the stress subordination of a medial adverb with linguistic stress.

'thare', 'out', 'in', etc., though he admits that the latter have some linguistic prominence: 'it is unlikely that a native speaker will read the monosyllabic medial adverbs in these verses without giving them some amount of phrasal stress'.[52] However, since he assumes no four-stave a-verses, at least at the time he wrote this article,[53] his explanation for stress subordination on the medial adverbs is sought in the distinction between linguistic and metrical stresses: '...but in this case linguistic stress is quite distinct from metrical stress. *Though metrical stresses are all phrasal, not every phrasal stress is metrical* (emphasis is given by Duggan)'.[54] The need for a clear distinction between linguistic stress and metrical ictus is again reiterated in his recent 'Extended A-Verses', where Duggan, quoting the above lines, admits not only the metrical subordination of the non-alliterating adverbs (e.g. 'in', 'out', 'vpe'), which do have linguistic stress, but also of the alliterating one (i.e. 'furth'): 'I think it more likely that [these lines] constitute evidence for stress subordination of the adverb, even when as in *WA* 1049, it carries alliteration'.[55] However, Duggan seems to apply this principle only to verses with four potential ictus positions, and not to the others; thus, he does not extend the principle to produce two-stress half-lines.

A similar inconsistency is observed in his scansion of *P* 426, where he takes the open-class 'bed' to lack metrical stress in spite of its alliteration:[56]

/ / /

Bed me bilyue my bale stour...

The alliterating 'bed' is suppressed in favour of the non-alliterating 'stour'.[57] Thus he is driven to adopt stress subordination to explain such a-verses with four possible ictus positions within the three-stave theory. Facing these problems, Duggan has come to the point at which he hints at the possibility of even four-stave a-verses: 'I have come to think that only their rarity leads us to suspect their authenticity...I am in no position to deny that [each of the lines cited just below] at least possibly represents an a-verse with

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[52] Duggan, 'Notes', 68.
[53] In his most recent article, he does seem to entertain the possibility of four-stave a-verses; see his 'Extended A-Verses', 74.
[54] Duggan, 'Notes', 68.
[55] Duggan, 'Extended A-Verses', 62-3.
[56] Duggan, 'Extended A-Verses', 72.
[57] Though at *WA* 487 ('Did on him his dragon-hame...') he promotes line-initial *did* (a verb, like 'bid', of almost negligible semantic weight) to ictus to meet the demands of alliteration ('Extended A-Verses', 62, n. 25).

four metrical stresses.'[58] Needless to say, this position inevitably undermines his b-verse rules. The following verses he cites as possible instances of four-stave a-verses:[59]

Bot as smylt mele vnder smal siue...	(*C* 226)
By forty dayez wern faren on folde...	(*C* 403)
Twenti thousand thro knightes...	(*DT* 8980)
My plowpote shal be my pyk-staf...	(*PPB* 6. 105)
And hulpen erie his half acre...	(*PPB* 6. 118)
Of bryȝt golde vpon silk bordes...	(*SGGK* 159)
Graunt mercy quod þe grete clerke...	(*WA* 370: 77)
And thre thousand of thra men...	(*WA* 2345)
Þat brynt in bely-blind niȝt...	(*WA* 5774)
A brighte banere of blee whitte...	(*WW* 175)[60]
In tailoures crafte and tynkares crafte...	(*PPB* 5.554)
With thre bibulles of ble white...	(*WW* 144)
With thre hedis white-herede...	(*WW* 150)

If the a-verse is to be regarded as having a maximum of three staves and no more, advocates of the three-stave theory must, and usually do, subordinate one of the four open-class words. If no subordination of open-class words is accepted as possible, not only four-stave a-verses but also three-stave b-verses would have to be admitted. Considering the fact that he has been entertaining the possibility of b-verses with three ictus positions, and here even that of four-stave a-verses, Duggan appears to take the latter position. But, if he accepts stress subordination on such nouns as *man*, *kyng*, *gold*, etc. modified by alliterating adjectives, but not other nouns, he would then have to subordinate 'kyng' in the following a-verse:

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[58] Duggan, 'Extended A-Verses', 74.

[59] Duggan would also so regard the following lines from *Sir Gawain*:

Ȝeȝed ȝeres-ȝiftes on hiȝ	ȝelde hem bi hond	(67)
In god fayth, quoþ þe goode knyȝt	Gawan I hatte	(381)
Gawan gef hym god day	þe godmon hym lachchez	(1029)
Þe does dryuen with gret dyn	to þe depe sladez	(1159)
Leude, on Nw Ȝerez lyȝt	longe bifore pryme	(1675)
To dele on Nw Ȝerez day	þe dome of my wyrdes	(1968)
Gef hym God and goud day	þat Gawayn he saue	(2073)
A denez ax new dyȝt	þe dynt with to ȝelde	(2223)

[60] *WW* represents *Wynnere and Wastoure*.

Ȝet hym is the hyȝe kyng	harder in heuen	*C* 50	aax/aa[61]

It is obvious from his scansion that he takes stress to fall on 'hyȝe' and on the non-alliterating 'kyng' as well, instead of promoting the pronoun 'hym' and destaving the noun 'kyng'. However, on the same principles that Duggan applies to the head stave of the b-verse, one expects 'kyng' to be subordinated here, if his scansion is to be consistent. If he treats certain kind of adjective + noun combinations in the b-verse as a single unit, he needs to explain why that principle is not extendable to the combination when it occurs at other positions in the line. It is more reasonable to treat all adjective + noun combinations (except where no other major elements co-occur in the same verse) as behaving metrically like 'compounds', with ictus falling on either element.

The inconsistencies described result in assuming a-verses randomly varying between two or three (or even four) stresses. This unpredictable shift would be highly anomalous in metrical form, where a regular number of lifts is expected, despite the 'licence' allowed in foot-counted metres of occasional Alexandrines, admitted by Pope and Dryden into their heroic couplets, where the rationale is more obvious (e.g. closing a verse-paragraph), or of the regularly occurring Alexandrine in Spenserian stanzas. In his *To the Pious Memory of the Accomplished Young Lady Mrs. Anne Killigrew*, Dryden employs the Alexandrine only 11 times in 195 lines (5.64%), a figure much lower than those presented by Duggan for the number of 'extended' a-verses: 30.1% (105 instances in 352 lines) in *St Erkenwald*, 23.5% (ll. 204-604) and 20.5%(1001-1400) of *Cleanness*, 30.1% (1-500) and 25.1% (1998-2495) of *Sir Gawain*, and 22.6% in all of *The Wars of Alexander*.[62] Although Duggan is cautious about the reliability of such counts, saying that they are subject to a great deal of variation depending on where the samples are chosen, even the lowest figure (16%) of his studies of all 400-line chunks in the 5, 807 lines of *WA* is far higher than 5.64% for Dryden's alexandrines—and much higher than Pearsall's analogy with Dryden's 'occasional' alexandrines would explain.[63] The three-stave a-verse is therefore not accountable for as an occasional 'poetic license'. It is perhaps this consideration which has led some scholars to conclude that the

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[61] Cited in Duggan, 'Meter', 225. Other examples of the a-verses in which Duggan assigns stress to each element of adjective + noun combination are (see 'Meter', 224):

Þe coge of þe cold water,	and þenne þe cry ryses	*P* 152 aax/ax
THE grete soun of Sodamas	synkkez in myn erez	*C* 689 xaa/ax
Fro riche Romulus to Rome	ricchis hym swyþe	*SG* 8 aaa/ax

[62] See 'Extended A-Verses', 65-6.

[63] See p. 4, n. 21 above.

alliterative long line has 'no distinctive metre', despite the abundant evidence that strict metrical constraints operate in the b-verse. A frequent, unpredictable shift from four-beat lines to five-/six- (or even seven-) beat lines, however, would result in disorientation on the part of the listener. As auditory effects must have been of utmost importance to the alliterative poets, it is unlikely that they employed this kind of metrical inconsistency. It is the four-beat rhythm, as Derek Attridge states in his *Poetic Rhythm*, that is the most common of all possible rhythmic patterns and is indeed the basis of a wide range of verse, including most hymns, nursery rhymes, and a great deal of printed poetry from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century.[64] Also, many verse forms (just as any forms of music—piano music, for instance—are normally constructed out of bar units such as four-bar, eight-bar, and sixteen bar) consist of the basic rhythm units by multiples of two.

In addition to the lack of metrical regularity inherent in the theory of three-stave (or four-stave) a-verses, one may easily fall into the danger of increasing the number of extended lines limitlessly, if, for instance, we choose always to give adjective + noun sequences two separate stresses for the reason that they are both open-class words and/or bear linguistic stress. Adverbs are also problematic in this respect. Duggan categorises monosyllabic adverbs as closed-class words and adverbs of two or more syllables as open-class words (on which stress normally falls), but does not consistently assign metrical stress to the latter.[65] If all such disyllabic adverbs, regardless of syntactic and semantic function, were regarded as bearing metrical prominence, his own figures on 'extended' lines would be even higher.

'Extended' verses by Duggan's scansion do not necessarily contain two or more open-class words; verses with one or even no open-class word sometimes have to be regarded as such. There are cases, for instance, where an a-verse has no open-class word, but has two monosyllabic adverbs and other function words, and even these would be three-stressed by Duggan's alliterative rules, though they in fact would more naturally be felt as metrically 'light'. Duggan scans *C* 517:[66]

And ay hatz ben and wyl be ȝet fro her barnage aax/ax

'Ay' and 'ȝet' are both non-alliterating monosyllabic adverbs. But since the caesura is structurally significant, he justly assigns metrical stress to pre-caesural 'ȝet'. But,

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[64] D. Attridge, *Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction* (Cambridge, 1995), 53.
[65] For adverbs and verb + adverb combinations, see 3.2 below.
[66] Duggan, 'Meter', 225.

since his metrical rules require any a-verse to have at least two alliterating staves, he also takes both 'ben' and 'be' to bear stress. To satisfy both alliterative and prosodic demands, he is creating more extended lines, which would be unnecessary with the application of stress subordination. I scan the same line simply as one with four stresses:

And ay hatz bén and wyl be 3ét fro her bárnáge ax/ax

At *SG* 2092, Duggan gives:[67]

And nów nár 3e not fér fro þat nóte pláce aax/ax

But I would scan:

And now nár 3e not fér fro þat nóte pláce ax/ax

It is worth emphasising again that he is creating extended a-verses where the assignment of only two stresses seems more appropriate in terms of metre and contextual emphasis.

The real problem inherent in the three-stave a-verse theory is the complications and inconsistencies involved, which prevent anyone from producing a well-defined account of 'extended' lines. Does *no* metrical subordination of linguistic stress occur in such verses? If not, does it not follow that some can have even four stresses in the first half-line? If it does occur, why cannot it be assumed to preclude three-stressed as well as four-stressed verses? Can subordination be allowed only in the adjective + noun combination and not in other syntactic units such as verb + adverb, noun + noun, etc.? Does subordination in the b-verse operate differently from subordination in the a-verse? The simplest solution to all these complications and inconsistencies seems to me the adoption of the two-stave half-line theory: the first half-line, however many open-class words it includes, invariably has only two metrical prominences, and the number of metrical ictuses in a-verses with three or more open-class words can always be reduced to two, which, as I will argue, are not always accompanied by alliteration. Therefore,

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[67] *Op. cit.*, 226.

whatever stress/alliterative pattern an a-verse takes—e.g. *(a)ax*, *(a)xa*, and *x(a)a* where alliteration and stress are separated—it can also be regarded as being as metrically regular as other verses where alliteration and stress coincide. The subordinated alliterating words would be pronounced with linguistic stress in real performance, but such stress is metrically irrelevant; however, alliteration functions to signal their semantic weight and to fulfil the alliterative expectations of the listener. In this sense, the term 'extended', which gives a wrong impression that such verses are metrically longer than the *standard* verses (i.e. verses with only two possible ictus positions), misrepresents the structure of the alliterative long line, and I therefore prefer to call them simply *crowded* verses.[68]

Here, I also want to suggest—and will argue shortly—that the a-verse is likely to have similar rhythmic and syllabic constraints to those of the b-verse (regarding the length and position of dips), and that rhythmic rules governing the placing of a long dip in the a-verse can serve, especially in the case of what have been regarded as 'extended' verses or, as I call them, crowded verses, to mark which two of three possible candidates for ictus in fact carry it. Alliteration *usually* serves this signalling purpose; but that it does not *always* do so is suggested by the fact that there are many a-verses where three alliterating open-class words occur (i.e. *aaa*), or where alliteration falls on 'little words' which would not naturally receive stress. My conclusions regarding the a-verse structure are not, in fact, in contradiction to Duggan's b-verse rules; on the contrary, they will serve as further evidence that his b-verse rhythmic rules—b-verses must have only two stresses and one and only one long dip either before or after the first b-verse stress—are right.

The notion that alliteration and stress are separable is not itself new. But it has been advanced only occasionally in connection with cases where alliteration falls on the prefix of a polysyllabic word (especially a word of romance origin) normally stressed on its stem; or in connection with so-called 'mute staves', in which structurally significant alliteration is carried by a normally unstressed grammatical word.[69] But the

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[68] The term 'crowded' is also used by J. Turville-Petre in her article with reference to an a-verse in which three open-class words occur: 'instead of two main constituents in *spaced* construction, there can be three in *crowded* construction' (320).

[69] See especially Matonis ('A Reexamination'), who, together with many other scholars, argue for the disjunction of alliteration and stress from this point of view. For discussion on 'mute stave', see A. V. C. Schmidt, *The Clerkly Maker: Langland's Poetic Art* (Cambridge, 1987), 36; Duggan, 'Notes', 58; 'Meter', 223. For G. Kane's theory of 'modulation' (which he introduces to explain b-verses in which alliteration falls on grammatical words), see his 'Music "Neither Unpleasant Nor Monotonous"', *Medieval Studies for J. A. W. Bennett aetatis suae LXX*, ed. P. L. Heyworth (Oxford, 1981), 43-63. Editors of alliterative poems who took a view that alliteration can fall on a prefix or on a normally unstressed closed-class word include M. Andrew and R. Waldron, eds., *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript* (Berkeley, 1979), 48; J. J.

disjunction between alliteration and stress which I have been proposing (and will demonstrate) is more radical, and in this sense my argument may serve to suggest a new orientation in the metrical analysis of Middle English alliterative poetry.

Accordingly, my aim in this thesis is to conduct a close and careful study of the metre of *Sir Gawain*, and thereby to describe the metrical principles underlying the Middle English alliterative long line, and demonstrate the stylistic possibilities that individual poets could exploit on the basis of these principles. In Chapter I, I will first examine alliterative patterning in lines with only one alliterating stress in the a-verse, and consider whether the non-*aa/ax* alliterative patterns in *Sir Gawain* should be treated as 'irregular' and thus be assumed to require emendation. Chapter II will deal with crowded a-verses, and how stress and alliteration function in such half-lines. In Chapter III, I will study combinations of various syntactic units, mainly those of adjective + noun and verb + adverb, and their metrical behaviour in alliterative long lines, and conclude the chapter by presenting general metrical rules which I believe are operative in the (standard and crowded) a-verse. Chapter IV will be aimed at the demonstration of these metrical rules, especially those of the crowded a-verse, by examining the metrical function in the alliterative long line of doublet forms, such as *to/for to* + infinitive, *on/vpon folde*, and *–ly/-lych(e* adverbs and adjectives. Chapters II, III, and IV are devoted to the case for the regular two-stave verse and the potential disjunction between alliteration and stress, and in those chapters I also argue that the length and position of a dip, as in the b-verse, is a determining factor in the rhythmic shape of the a-verse.

In Chapter V, I will then explore the relation of the metre of *Sir Gawain* to that of *Cleanness* and *Patience*, the other two alliterative poems in the manuscript, and three other alliterative poems, namely, *The Destruction of Troy*, *The Wars of Alexander*, and *St Erkenwald*, which have been selected as controls (*DT* is regular metrically; *WA* is extant in two manuscripts and one can, when needed, consult the other witness to produce a more reliable scansion of a given line; and *SE*, a work once attributed to the *Gawain* poet,[70] is very close to the Cotton Nero poems in dialect and metre). I will

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Anderson, ed., *Cleanness* (Manchester, 1977), 113; the same editor's *Patience* (Manchester, 1969), 20. Although Borroff argues for the possible subordination of an alliterating open-class word to a non-alliterating one in an a-verse with three or four possible ictus positions, she also gives the subordinated alliterating element secondary stress, which, as I have argued above, has no place in metrical analysis. Borroff's stance is thus slightly different from mine in that I grant no such 'secondary stress' to a subordinated open-class element even if it is alliterating, though I have no intention of denying the presence of *linguistic* ('primary' or 'secondary') stress on such a word.

[70] L. D. Benson has convincingly argued that *SE* and the Cotton Nero poems were not written by the same author; see 'The Authorship of *St. Erkenwald*', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 64

examine (1) what metrical features are shared by the CN poems with all three controls, (2) what shared by the CN poems with one or two of the controls, (3) what shared by the CN poems only, and (4) what exclusive to *Sir Gawain.*

Chapter VI will explore how the alliterative metre can be exploited for stylistic purposes. I will study the deployment of the metre by this highly imaginative poet in particular narrative contexts in order to demonstrate its potential for aesthetic effects that enhance and cooperate with context. The main focus will be on his treatment of alliteration, the b-verse, the last stave, and redundant elements such as stock prepositional phrases and intensifiers. I believe that the poet's technique in these metrical contexts is one of the features of his metrical style that could serve to distinguish him from many other alliterative poets. In connection with this, the bob and wheel will be re-examined to establish the total effect of this unique verse form, namely, the combination of unrhymed alliterative long line and rhyming stanza.

(1965), 393-405.

CHAPTER I

NON-*AA/AX* ALLITERATIVE PATTERNS

1.1 *Ax/ax* or *xa/ax* alliterative patterns

One of the disagreements between J. Turville-Petre and H. Duggan can be seen in their treatments of lines with only one alliterative stress in the first half-line. Duggan regards them as inauthentic, whereas J. Turville-Petre does not. Unlike Duggan, she does not seem to be assuming the possibilities of patterns obscured by textual corruption and scribal intervention. However, it should also be pointed out that Duggan does not include in his corpora the complete data taken from the entire poem: only lines 1-500 are in his first corpus and lines 1998-2498 in the second corpus.[1] The data collected by scanning the whole poem could therefore present a possibility, and perhaps a necessity, as far as *Sir Gawain* is concerned, of modifying his metrical rules or regarding the poem as an exception to them. J. Turville-Petre's view that the alliterative pattern *ax/ax* (or *xa/ax*) may be one of the patterns the poet probably allowed in this poem is, I think, basically right. I came to the same conclusion after my individual study of the poem. My findings also support some of the important points J. Turville-Petre makes in her essay. In the following sections, I will present my own conclusions, referring to her arguments as well as those of Duggan, where relevant.

1.1.1 Metrical compensation for the non-alliterating a-verse stave

There are 110 lines out of 2025[2] (5.43%) in which *ax/ax* or *xa/ax* patterns occur. Of these, 80 lines (72.07%) seem to be metrically compensated for by alliterative links with adjacent lines. These lines may be subcategorised into two types:

a) either the non-alliterating stave in the a-verse or the (also non-alliterating) last stave is alliterated with a stave (usually the last) or staves of the preceding or following line;
b) the two alliterating staves are alliterated with the last stave of the preceding or

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[1] Duggan, 'Final *–e*', 123.
[2] I exclude the bobs and wheels.

following line.

I call these metrical devices the techniques of 'metrical compensation', in which a cross-line alliteration is employed *metrically* to compensate for the lack of one alliterative stress in the a-verse.

Another compensatory device is alliteration between the two last staves in adjacent lines. This alliteration, on two words both outside the line-internal alliteration, is essentially the weakest in its link. I must admit that this compensatory device is the least convincing of all that I have proposed. However, since it appears to be used occasionally in lines with only two alliterative stresses, I believe it worthwhile to list the instances (12 lines). Some of the examples may be defective or corrupt, although there seems no grounds other than their deviant alliterative patterns for assuming that these lines require emendation: they all make perfect sense and are integrated into the narrative flow. Moreover, the fact that 72.07% of the lines with the *ax/ax* or *xa/ax* pattern are metrically compensated for by cross-line alliteration may well mean something. In addition, in most of these lines, the non-alliterating word in the a-verse is either a closed-class word (such as pronoun and preposition) or an open-class word with light semantic weight, and semantically more important words almost always bear alliterative stress. It is possible that the scribe might have deleted or changed another open class word which existed in the original. But the frequency suggests that it is equally likely that the poet might write a line with only two alliterative stresses (always crossing the caesura)[3] especially under the condition either (a) that the non-alliterating a-verse or line-final stave in a line is metrically compensated for in an adjacent line, or (b) that the two alliterating staves in the line also alliterate with the last stave of the preceding or following line. Through these compensatory cross-line alliterations, there is a possible attempt to give the line its lacking third alliterative stress. These lines are apparently 'irregular' and deviant from the standard *aa/ax* pattern, but compensatory alliteration could be regarded as producing some conformity.

Ax/ax or *xa/ax* patterns occur in every fitt. However, while Fitts One and Two present more or less equal occurrences of these patterns, the third and forth fitts, though one should take into account their length, show higher occurrence. This may be related to the frequency of direct speech in the third fitt and/or to increasing confidence in diverging from the classic *aa/ax* pattern more strictly observed in *Cleanness* and *Patience*.

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[3] T. Turville-Petre also suggests the possible authenticity of lines with only two alliterative stresses, which he also argues 'must span the medial pause' (*The Alliterative Revival*, 54).

Fitt I

An item in parentheses indicates a non-alliterating stave in the a-verse that seems to be metrically compensated for by the devices specified above.[4]

Group (a)

25-6	Bot of *a*lle þat here bult	of Bretaygne knynges	
	Ay watz Arthur þe hendest	as I haf herde telle	(alle)*
110-1	And Agrauayn a la dure mayn	on þat oþer syde *s*ittes[5]	
	Boþe þe kynges sistersunes	and ful siker kniȝtes[6]	(dure)
130-1	Now *w*yl I of hor seruise	say yow no more	
	For vch wyȝe may wel wit	no wont þat þer were	(wyl)
263-4	And here is kydde cortaysye	as I haf *h*erd carp	
	And þat hatz wayned me *h*ider	iwyis, at þis tyme	(hider)*
265-6	Ȝe may be *s*eker bi þis braunch	þat I bere here	
	Þat I passe as in pes	and no plyȝt *s*eche	(seker)
272-3	Bot *i*f þou be so bold	as alle burnez tellen	
	Þou wyl grant me godly	þe gomen þat I *a*sk	(if)*
332-3	Þe stif mon hym bifore	stod vpon *h*yȝt[7]	
	Herre þen ani in þe hous	by þe hede and more[8]	(bifore)
473-4	Among þise kynde caroles	of knyȝtez and *l*adyez	
	Neuer þe *l*ece to my mete	I may me wel dres	(lece)

Notes:

25-6 N. Davis also takes the view that stress falls on 'alle' rather than 'Bot' (Davis, 150); but stress on the latter is argued by Duggan: '*all* as predeterminer, adjective, or pronoun rarely occurs in positions of metrical ictus' ('Stress

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[4] The lines below are all taken from *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, eds. J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon, 2nd edn., rev. Norman Davis (Oxford, 1967). * indicates that a comment on a given line can be found in the notes following the list.

[5] This b-verse is unmetrical as it stands, having two long dips. For the scansion of this a-verse, see p. 91 below.

[6] This line has the *ab/ba* alliterative pattern, which I will discuss later in this chapter.

[7] For the scansion of this a-verse, see p. 40, n. 31, and also p. 90 below.

[8] I take the first half-line to be a crowded verse, with metrical stress on 'any' and 'hous', subordinating the verse-opening 'Herre'; see Chapter II for stress assignment and subordination rules for crowded a-verses.

Assignment', 313); but stress seems to fall on 'al' in line 1429 ('Þen al in a semblé sweyed togeder'; see p.25 below) and perhaps 645 ('His þro þoȝt watz in þat þurȝ all oþer þyngez'; see p. 42 below) as well.

263-4 Line 263, as it stands, reads *aa/xa*, a pattern which Duggan regards as metrically not permissible. This pattern occurs 27 times (see p. 40 below) in this poem—rather too often to be satisfactorily explained as 'scribal corruption'. It seems to me that the balance of the scale is in favour of the authenticity of (some of) the *aa/xa* lines. Whether or not the line could be amended to *aa/ax*, the lack of one alliterative stress in line 264 is still compensated for by compensatory alliteration between 'hider' and 'herd', a stave in the preceding line.

272-3 One may argue that stress on 'þou' rather than 'if' would sound more natural. But notice line 2055 ('ȝif þay for charyté cherysen a gest'), where stress must fall on 'ȝif' and not 'þay' (unless 'charyté' has two stresses) for the a-verse to have one long dip, which, I will argue later, is required for metricality; stress on *if* in the if-construction may have sounded less unnatural then than now.

Group (b)

23-4	Mo ferlyes on þis folde	han fallen here *o*ft	
	Þen in any oþer þat I wot	syn þat ilk tyme	(wot)
348-9	For me þink hit not semly	as hit is soþ knawen	
	Þer such an askyng is heuened	so hyȝe in your *s*ale	(þink)

Fitt II

Group (a)

644-5	And quere-so-*e*uer þys mon	in melly watz stad	
	His þro þoȝt watz in þat	þurȝ alle oþer þynges[9]	(quere-so-euer)
953-4	Rugh ronkled chekez	þat *o*þer on rolled	
	Kerchofes of þat *o*n	wyth mony cler perlez	(on)

[9] Lines 645 and 953 have the pattern *aa/xa* (see p. 40 below), but whether or not these b-verses are emended to *ax*, it will not affect my argument.

956-7	Schon schyrer þen snawe	þat schedez on *h*illez	
	Þat *o*þer wyth a gorger	watz gered ouer þe swyre	(oþer)
1029-30	Gawan gef hym god day	þe godmon hym *l*achchez	
	*L*edes hym to his awen chambre	þe chymné bysyde[10]	(Ledes)
1034-5	And enbelyse his burȝ	with his bele chere	
	Iwysse sir, quyl I leue	me worþez þe *b*etter	(leue)
1066-7	*N*af I now to busy	bot bare þre dayez	
	And me als fayn to falle feye	as fayly of my*n* ernde	(Naf)

Group (b)

592-3	So harnayst as he watz	he herknez his masse	
	Offred and honoured	at þe heȝe *a*uter	(watz)*
607-8	Hit watz hyȝe on his hede	hasped bi*h*ynde	
	Wyth a lyȝtly vrysoun	ouer þe auentayle	(lyȝtly)
704-5	If þay hade herde any karp	of a knyȝt *gr*ene	
	In any grounde þeraboute	of þe grene chapel	(herde *and* þeraboute)*
835-6	He sayde, Ȝe are welcum	to welde as yow lykez	
	Þat here is; al is yowre awen	to haue at yowre *w*ylle	(sayde)
1008-9	Þat for to telle þerof	hit me tene were	
	And to poynte hit ȝet I pyned me	parauen*t*ure	(þerof)
1039- 40	And I am wyȝe at your wylle	to worch youre *h*est	
	As I am halden þerto	in hyȝe and in loȝe	(þerto)
1058-9	Of þe grene chapel	quere hit on grounde stondez	
	And of þe knyȝt þat hit kepes	of colour of *gr*ene	(chapel; cf. 1753)

Notes:

592-3 Duggan's metrical rule would require stress to fall on 'harnayst' and 'he', as it necessitates any a-verse to have at least two alliterative stresses. Another example involving *was* at the pre-caesural position occurs at *C* 1698 ('Erne-hwed he watȝ and al ouerbrawden'); here, I scan the a-verse as *(a)ax*, with the pre-caesural stress falling on 'watȝ' (see also p. 213 below). *SE* 139

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[10] 'Þe chymné' in the b-verse is an emendation from the manuscript 'þehȳne', but it does not affect my argument; the a-verse still lacks one alliterative stress.

has a similar syntactic structure to that of *SG* 592: 'As riche revestid as he was he rayked to þe toumbe'; again, it is 'was' that seems to be given the pre-caesural stress (see also P. 213 below).

704-5 The lines involve 'double' metrical compensation by last-stave 'grene' in line 704, though the lack of one alliterative stress in the a-verse of the first line is compensated for by means of device *a* (i.e. alliteration between the non-alliterating word at the last stave and the line-internal staves in the next line).

Fitt III

Group (a)

1217-8	And þus he bourded a3ayn	with mony a blyþe *la3*ter	
	Bot wolde 3e, lady louely	þen leue me grante	(a3ayn)
1265-6	And oþer ful much of oþer folk	fongen bi hor *d*edez	
	Bot þe daynté þat þay delen	for my disert nys euen	(much)
1292-3	Now he þat spedez vche spech	þis disport 3elde yow	
	Bot þat 3e be Gawan	hit gotz in mynde	(3e)
1303-4	I schal kysse at your comaundement	as a kny3t *f*allez	
	And *f*ire, lest he displese yow	so plede hit no more	(fire)
1393-4	Hit may be such hit is þe better	and 3e me breue *w*olde	
	Where 3e *w*an þis ilk *w*ele	bi *w*ytte of yorseluen	(such)
1395-6	Þat watz not forward, quoþ *h*e	frayst me no more	
	For 3e haf tan þat yow tydez,	trawe non *o*þer	(he)
1403-4	Wy3ez þe walle wyn	we3ed to hem *o*ft	
	And *e*fte in her bourdyng	þay bayþen in þe morn	(efte)
1428-9	Hunterez hem hardened	wth horne and wyth muthe	
	Þen *a*l in a semblé	sweyed togeder	(al)
1501-2	I am at your comaundement	to kysse quen yow *l*ykez	
	3e may lach quen yow lyst	and leue quen yow þynkkez	(I *or* am *or* at)
1525-6	And 3e, þat ar so cortays	and coynt of your *h*etes	
	*O*ghe to a 3onke þynk	3ern to schewe[11]	(3e *and* Oghe)*
1568-9	Til at þe last he watz so mat	he my3t no more renne	

[11] The b-verse is unmetrical as it stands, lacking a long dip; '3ern' should perhaps be emended to '3erne' with the sounded infinitive *–e*.

	Bot in þe hast þat he *m*y3t	he to a hole wynnez	(my3t)
1601-2	There watz blawyng of prys	in mony breme *h*orne	
	He3e halowing on hi3e	with haþelez þat my3t	(prys)*
1624-5	When he se3e Sir *G*awayn	with solace he spekez	
	Þe goude ladyez were geten	and gedered þe meyny	(Gawayn)*
1657-8	And euer oure luflych kny3t	þe lady bisyde	
	Such semblaunt to þat segge	semly ho made	(kny3t)
1770-1	For þat prynces of pris	depresed hym so *þ*ikke	
	Nurned hym so ne3e þe *þ*red	þat nede hym bihoued	(þred)*
1784-5	Þat yow lausen ne lyst	and þat I leue *n*ouþe	
	And þat 3e telle me þat *n*ow	trwly I pray yow	(now)
1805-6	Bot to dele yow for drurye	þat dawed bot *n*eked	
	Hit is *n*ot your honour	to haf at þis tyme	(not)*
1838-9	To acheue to þe chaunce	þat he hade chosen *þ*ere	
	And *þ*erfore, I pray yow	displese yow no3t	(þerfore)
1853-4	Þer is no haþel vnder heuen	tohewe hym þat *m*y3t	
	For he *m*y3t not be slayn	for sly3t vpon erþe	(my3t)
1884-5	As domezday schulde haf ben	di3t on þe *m*orn	
	And syþen mace hym as mery	among þe fre ladyes	(ben)*
1912-3	*B*i þat watz comen	his compeyny noble	
	Alle þat euer ber bugle	blowed at ones	(Bi)*
1982-3	Þay bikende hym to Kryst	with ful colde *s*ykyngez	
	*S*yþen fro þe meyny	he menskly departes	(Syþen)

Notes:

1525-6 As was the case with lines 704-5 above, these lines are another instance of 'double' metrical compensation (i.e. '3e' in 1525 alliterating with '3onke' and '3ern' in 1526, and 'Oghe' in 1526 with 'hetes' in 1525).

1601-2 I do not take /b/ and /p/ to be a possible combination in the poet's alliterative system (though it is highly likely that the poet occasionally exploits the closeness of their sound values for poetic purposes). The compensatory alliteration for non-alliterating 'prys' supports this hypothesis.

1624-5 The *Gawain* poet, as I shall demonstrate later, rarely uses minor adjectives (e.g. *mony*, *any*, *same*) or title nouns (e.g. *sir*, *duk*, *whene*) as a combination element merely to achieve alliteration, as opposed to many other alliterative poets (for the adjective + noun combinations in *Sir Gawain*, see 3.1 below); thus the line

should be taken simply as a standard a-verse with the *ax* pattern.

1770-1 Duggan would read this as an 'extended' a-verse with the second and third a-verse stresses falling on the preposition 'neȝe' and on 'þred'. If one takes—though I do not—the first half-line to be a crowded verse with three possible ictus positions (i.e. 'Nurned', 'neȝe', and 'þred'), 'neȝe' would have to be subordinated to the other two open-class words so that the verse will have the metrically required long dip between the two a-verse stresses (see my discussion on crowded a-verses in Chapter II below). I take the line simply as *ax/ax*.

1805-6 Although stress on 'Hit' or 'is' would render the a-verse *aa*, it is here 'not' that seems to have more rhetorical emphasis and therefore be a more likely candidate for ictus.

1884-5 If one takes the compound 'domezday' to have two possible ictus positions, the verse could be scanned as *(a)ax*, with ictus falling on the third syllable of 'domesday' and 'ben', subordinating the first syllable of the compound; the a-verse would then be treated as a regular crowded a-verse, with the obligatory long dip between the two stresses (for rhythmic rules governing crowded a-verses, see Chapter II); for noun + noun combinations (as variants of adjective + noun combinations), see pp. 221-4 below.

1912-3 As it stands, stress must fall on 'Bi' so that the verse has a long dip, which I will argue, is required for the metricality of the a-verse (see 3.3 below).

Group (b)

1136-7	With bugle to bent-felde	he buskez by*l*yue	
	Bi þat any dayly3t	lemed vpon erþe	(Bi; cf. 1912-3)*
1969-70	Bi þay were tened at þe hy3e	and taysed to þe wattrez	
	Þe ledez were so lerned	at þe lo3e *t*rysteres	(hy3e)
1305-6	Ho comes nerre with þat	and cachez hym in armez	
	Loutez luflych adoun	and þe leude *k*yssez	(þat)
1480-1	And wyth a luflych loke	ho layde hym þyse *w*ordez	
	Sir, 3if 3e be Wawen	wonder me þynkke	(Sir, 3if, *or* 3e)
1567-8	Bot 3et þe styffest to start	bi stoundez he *m*ade	
	Til at þe last he watz so mat	he my3t no more renne	(last)

1727-8	Ofte he watz **r**unnen at	when he out ***r***ayked[12]	
	And ofte **r**eled in a3ayn	so **R**eniarde watz wylé	(a3ayn)
1942-3	Mary, quoþ þat oþer mon	myn is bi***h***ynde	
	For I haf **h**unted al þis day	and no3t **h**af I geten	(day)

Note:

1136-7 The placement of the first a-verse ictus is not obvious, but on whichever word ('Bi', 'any', or the first syllable of 'dayly3t') the stress falls, the a-verse still lacks one alliterative stress. If 'any' bears the first stress, the line will become *ab/ba*.

Fitt IV

Group (a)

2015-6	Fyrst he **cl**ad hym in his **cl**oþez	þe **c**olde for to were	
	And syþen his oþer **h**arnays	þat **h**oldely watz ***k***eped	(syþen)
2122-3	Þat I schal swere bi **G**od	and alle his gode ***h***al3ez	
	As help me God and þe **h**alydam	and oþez innoghe[13]	(swere)
2055-6	**3**if þay for **ch**aryté	**ch**erysen a gest	
	And halden honour in her honde	þe haþel hem **3**elde	(**3**if)*
2179-80	Debatande with himself	quat hit **b**e my3t	
	Hit hade a **h**ole on þe ende	and on ayþer ***s***yde	(himself)
2266-7	As hit com **gl**ydande adoun	on **gl**ode hym to ***sch***ende	
	And **sch**ranke a lytel with þe **sch**ulderes for þe **sch**arp yrne		(adoun)*
2301-2	I hope þat þi hert ar3e	wyth þyn awen ***s***eluen	
	For ***s***oþe, quoþ þat oþer **fr**eke	so **f**elly þou spekez	(soþe)
2321-2	Watz he neuer in þis worlde	wy3e half so ***b***lyþe	
	Blynne, **b**urne, of þy **b**ur	**b**ede me no mo	(neuer)
2342-3	I relece þe of þe remnaunt	of ry3tes al***l***e oþer	
	Iif I de***l***iuer had **b**ene	a **b**offet paraunter	(deliuer)*
2438-9	Þe loke to þis luf-lace	schal leþe my ***h***ert	

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[12] Line 1727 scans *ab/ab*, a pattern which I will discuss in 1.2 below.

[13] This line serves as an instance of a crowded a-verse which I annotate as *(a)xa*, in which an alliterating open-class word at verse-opening (i.e. 'help') is stress-subordinated to the second *non*-alliterating open-class word (i.e. 'God')—on which the first a-verse stress is to fall—and to the third open-class word bearing the second (or pre-caesural) stress; see Chapter II below.

	Bot *o*n I wolde yow pray	displeses yow neuer	(on)
2509-10	Þis is þe token of vntrawþe	þat I am ta*n* inne	
	And I mot *n*edez hit were	wyle I may last	(nedez)

Notes:

2055-6 The first stress must fall on '3if' (unless 'charyté' has two stresses) in order for the a-verse to have the metrically required long dip, which, as I shall argue, must occur, if it is a standard a-verse, either before or after the first stress (see 3.3 below). In this syntactic structure (i.e. if + pronoun), the poet seems to be allowing for stress to fall on '3if' rather than the more natural (to the modern ear) 'þay'. Therefore, line 272 (p. 22 above) may also have stress on 'if'.

2266-7 One may argue that the line alliterates on 'com' and 'glydande', the unvoiced and voiced stops; in this case, the a-verse would scan *(a)ax* (though Duggan would treat it as an 'extended' line). Alliteration between /k/ and /g/ is not unambiguously attested in this poem, while there are more lines which present counterevidence (see 1.4. below for discussion on alliteration between non-identical consonants); I take this a-verse as a standard verse, with stress on 'glydande' and 'adoun', as 'com', together with other monosyllabic verbs such as *let*, *made*, and *had*, can be treated as a non-stressed 'function' word (i.e. virtually a closed-class word); for discussion on such 'function' verbs, see p. 54 below.

2342-3 One may argue that elision alliteration is inconsistently adopted in my scansion to argue for the authenticity of the *ax/ax* or *xa/ax* pattern, since I do assume elision alliteration here, but not, for example, in line 1396b ('...trawe non oþer'). However, elision alliteration is a metrical device that alliterative poets may or may not have exploited to meet various metrical demands. Accordingly, I adopt it only when this kind of alliteration seems to me to be serving to provide compensatory alliteration with a line with the *ax/ax* or *xa/ax* pattern. Duggan makes the same point: 'Elision is a stylistic option and does not always occur' ('Meter', 225, n.7).

Group (b)

2163-4	And þenne he wayted hym aboute	and wylde hit hym þo3t	
	And se3e no syngne of resette	bisydez no*wh*ere	(about)

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2191-2	Wel bisemez þe wyȝe	wruxled in grene	
	Dele here his deuocioun	on þe deuelez *w*yse	(bisemez)
2320-1	Neuer syn þat he watz burne	borne of his moder	
	Watz he neuer in þis worlde	wyȝe half so *b*lyþe	(syn)
2522-3	Þus in Arthurus day	þis aunter bitidde	
	Þe Brutus bokez þer*o*f	beres wyttenesse	(day)*

2522-3 Here, the lack of one alliterative stress in the a-verse of line 2522 is metrically compensated for by alliteration between the two alliterating words, 'Arthurus' and 'aunter', and 'þerof' in the second stave of the following line; as 'þerof' does not join the line-internal alliteration, it can be regarded as an equivalent of a non-alliterating last-stave word, which normally serves this compensatory purpose.

In this way, the *ax/ax* or *xa/ax* lines listed above seem to share the same compensatory devices for resolving apparent metrical irregularities. In the following lines, the non-alliterating a-verse stave could also be regarded as being compensated for by means of alliteration between two last staves in adjacent lines:

93-4	Of sum auenturus þyng	an vncouþe *t*ale	
	Of sum mayn meruayle	þat he myȝt *t*rawe	(þyng)
649-50	In þe inore half of his schelde	hir ymage de*p*aynted	
	Þat quen he blusched þerto	his belde neuer *p*ayred	(þerto)
799-800	Vpon bastel rouez	þat blenked ful *qu*yte	
	So mony pynakle payntet	watz poudred ay*qu*ere	(rouez)
1056-7	Forþy, sir, þis enquest	I require yow *h*ere	
	Þat ȝe me telle with trawþe	if euer ȝe tale *h*erde	(Forþy)
1062-3	And of þat ilk Nw Ȝere	bot neked now *w*ontez	
	And I wolde loke on þat lede	if God me let *w*olde	(Ȝere)
1255-6	Þen much of þe garysoun	oþer golde þat þay *h*auen[14]	
	Bot I louue þat ilk lorde	þat þe lyfte *h*aldez	(much)
1487-8	What is þat, quoþ þe wyghe	Iwysse I wot *n*euer	
	If hit be sothe þat ȝe breue	þe blame is my*n* awen	(sothe)
1536-7	Gret is þe gode gle	and gomen to me *h*uge	

[14] This b-verse is unmetrical as it stands, having two long dips; the emendation of 'oþer' into its doublet form, *or*, will produce a metrical half-line.

	Þat so worþy as ȝe	wolde wynne *h*idere	(ȝe)*
1542-3	To yow þat, I wot wel	weldez more *s*lyȝt	
	Of þat art, bi þe half	or a hundreth of *s*eche	(yow)
1753-4	At þe grene chapel	when he þe gome *m*etes[15]	
	And bihoues his buffet abide	withoute debate *m*ore	(chapel)
2013-4	Þat oþer ferkez hym vp	and fechez hym his *w*edez	
	And grayþez me Sir Gawayn	vpon a grett *w*yse	(vp)
2445-6	Bertilak de Hautdesert	I hat in þis *l*onde	
	Þurȝ myȝt of Morgne la Faye	þat in my hous *l*enges	(Bertilak)*

Note:

1536-7 Alliteration between *y* and *h* or any vowel (which would here yield an *ab/ab* line) is probably not a possibility, despite some small support for it offered by line 356, 'Bot for as much as ȝe ar myn em I am only to prayse' (a line which offers three possible types of scansion and so cannot stand as strong evidence), and 1526 (where, however, 'Oghe' and 'ȝonke' seem not to alliterate; the verse seems to be given compensatory alliteration by means of cross-line alliteration).

2445 The line can also be scanned *ab/ba*; see p. 36 below.

Following are the lines that could be regarded as producing some conformity to the standard *aa/ax* pattern:

44*	For þer þe fest watz ilyche	ful fiften dayes
398*	Where schulde I wale þe, quoþ Gauan,	where is þy place
1544*	As I am, oþer euer schal	in erde þer I leue

Notes:

44 Traditional scansion would render this line as *ax/ax*, alliterating on 'fest' and 'ilyche' in the a-verse, and the line would thus be regarded as non-standard. Tolkien and Gordon, for instance, take 'ilyche' as a predicative adjective ('the same') and 'ful' an adverb 'fully', thus placing the caesura before 'ful'; but Duggan thinks it comes after 'ful', taking the word as an adjective (see Duggan, 'Stress Assignment', 313). If this is the case, 'fiften' must have a final pronounced etymological *–e* for the b-verse to have its obligatory long dip.

398 The traditional scansion would render this line as *ax/ax*, alliterating on 'wale' and 'Gauan' in the a-verse. Considering that MS *Gawan* was emended to 'Wawan' in line 342 ('Wolde ȝe, worþelych lorde, quoþ Wawan to þe kyng'), it is also possible to emend 'Gauan' in line 398 to 'Wawan', yielding a regular *aa/ax* line. If one argues that verse-opening 'Where' carries phrasal stress, the a-verse should then be treated as a crowded verse, with 'Where' being stress-subordinated to 'wale' and 'Gauan' (thus *(a)ax*).

1544 I take the first a-verse stress to fall on either 'I' or 'am', and the second on 'euer' rather than 'schal'; thus, the line can be regarded as having a standard *aa/ax* pattern, alliterating on vowels.

1.1.2 A-verses of *ax* or *xa* patterns with no metrical compensation

Following are lines with no metrical compensation. I will first list lines with *ax/ax*, which are followed by those with *xa/ax*:

301	If he hem stowned vpon fyrst	stiller were þanne	(fyrst)
343	Wolde ȝe, worþilych lorde,	quoþ Wawan to þe kyng	(lorde)
552	Sir Doddinaual de Sauage	þe duk of Clarence	(Sauage)
741	Into a forest ful dep	þat ferly watz wylde	(dep)
797	With coruon coprounes	craftyly sleȝe	(coprounes)*
1216	And þat is þe best, be my dome	for me byhouez nede	(dome)
1267	Hit is þe worchyp of yourself	þat noȝt bot wel connez	(yourself)
1332	Syþen rytte þay þe foure lymmes	and rent of þe hyde	(lymmes)*
1355	And þe corbles fee	þay kest in a greue	(fee)
1575	To nye hym on-ferum	bot neȝe hym non durst	(on-ferum)
1606	To vnlace þis bor	lufly bigynnez	(bor)
2091	For I haf wonnen yow hider	wyȝe, at þis tyme	(hider)
2092	And now nar ȝe not fer	fro þat note place	(fer)
2324	And if þow rechez me any mo	I redyly schal quyte	(mo)

356	Bot for as much as ȝe ar myn em	I am only to prayse[16]	(much)*

[15] Cf. 1058

[16] This b-verse is unmetrical as it stands, having two long dips; but the contraction of 'I am' to *I'm* would render the verse metrical.

544	And spekez of his passage	and pertly he sayde	(spekez)
860	Þer he watz dispoyled	wyth spechez of myerþe	(Þer)*
1091	Ȝe, sir, for soþe,	sayd þe segge trwe	(Ȝe)
1340	And eft at þe gargulun	bigynez on þenne	(eft)*
1390	Tas yow þere my cheuicaunce	I cheued no more	(Tas *or* þere)*
1671	For hit watz neȝ at þe terme	þat he to schulde	(neȝ)
1724	Loude he watz ȝayned	with ȝarande speche	(Loude)
1760	He seȝ hir so glorious	and gayly atyred	(seȝ)
1828	Ȝe wolde not so hyȝly	halden be to me	(not)
2027	Ennurned vpon veluet	vertuus stonez	(Ennurned)
2132	Bot I wyl to þe chapel	for chaunce þat may falle	(wyl)
2141	Þat þou wylt þyn awen nye	nyme to þyseluen	(wylt)*
2394	As þou hadez neuer forfeted	syþen þou watz fyrst borne	(neuer)
2414	Bot hit is no ferly	þaȝ a fole madde	(Bot *or* hit)*
2519	For þat watz acorded þe renoun	of þe Rounde Table	(acorded)

Notes:

797 Stress on 'coruon' and the first syllable of 'coprounes' would result in a verse with no long dip either before or after the first stress; and any standard a-verse lacking an initial or central long dip should, as I shall argue in the following chapters, be regarded as unmetrical.

1332 One may argue that there is some phonetic matching of two liquids (/l/ and /r/), but there is no other instance of liquid alliteration in the text.

356 Elision alliteration between nasals /m/ and /n/ is a possibility; there are three other possible instances in the Cotton Nero poems—two in *Cleanness* (513 'Now, Noe, no more nel I neuer wary' and 1304 'And Nabugodenoȝar makes much ioye') and one in *Patience* (332 'For þink þat mountes to noȝt her mercy forsaken').

860 Cf. 1725: 'Þer he watz þreted and ofte þef called'.

1340 The line could alliterate on gargulun, producing the rhythm xxxx//x, which is, according to J. Turville-Petre, one type of the short interval rhythms (J. Turville-Petre, 317). Another example in which two a-verse stresses fall on one word is 'absolucioun' in line 1882 ('And of absolucioun he on þe segge calles'). However, considering line 1335 ('Þay gryped to þe gargulun and grayþely departed')—where stress falls, in the a-verse, on 'gryped' and on the

first syllable of 'gargulun'—it is more likely that 'gargulun' here is given only one alliterative stress, the first a-verse stress falling on 'eft' (cf. 1404a 'And efte in her bourdyng þay bayþen in þe morn').

1390 One might argue that elision between 'Tas' and 'yow' (/j/) makes the line 'regular'(alliterating on /tʃ/ and /j/). But stress on the pronoun in an imperative sentence would perhaps strain the natural placement of stress.

2141 The line would become a regular *aa/ax* line only if the first a-verse stress is assumed to fall on the adjective 'awen' (whose initial vowel can be elided with the preceding *n* in 'þyn') rather than on 'wil' ('to wish (for)'), which seems to have more semantic importance.

2414 There are two more lines in which stress appears to be falling on *hit*; see 1187 and 1922.

Some of these lines may be unauthorial, though none of them has, except for their deviant alliterative patterns, anything suspect in terms of sense and rhythm. And considering the fact that the lines do not sound clumsy, it is possible that the poet is prepared to use the pattern without any compensatory alliteration.

1.2 *Ab/ab, ab/ba* alliterative patterns and their variants

1.2.1 *ab/ab, ab/ba* patterns

The *ab/ab (ab/ba)* pattern is also regarded as inauthentic by Duggan. This pattern and its variants (e.g. *(a)ab/ab* and *(a)bb/ba*) occur in 41 lines (2.02%), 20 of which are *ab/ab* or *ab/ba*, involving standard a-verses (i.e. a-verses with only two possible ictus positions). Therefore, if these 20 lines are all scribal errors, it follows that the scribe changed one of the stressed words in the a-verse to create another alliterative pattern, or deleted an open-class word which would otherwise have produced a regular alliterative line. But even if another open-class word is missing in the a-verse, the line would still yield, for instance, *aab/ab* and *aba/ab*. In addition, the *ab/ab* pattern occurs in poems written in rhymed alliterative stanzas such as *The Awntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyne*,[17] and *Sir Gawain* itself has a somewhat similar stanzaic form with rhymes

[17] See, for example, lines 1, 68, 94, 176, 202, 561, 615, 683 in *The Awyntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyn*, ed. R. Hanna (Manchester, 1974).

rounding off the stanza-like paragraphs of irregular length. Considering these points, the authenticity of the *ab/ab* pattern (and its variants) is more than a remote possibility.

It is clear from the examples below that the last stave can function to provide compensatory alliteration for lines which would otherwise have only two alliterative stresses. In most of the lines, primary alliteration (alliteration between one of the a-verse staves and the head stave of the b-verse) serves to maintain the cohesion between the two hemistichs and the words in question carry most of the meaning in the line. The last stave serves to reinforce the cohesion by echoing the other a-verse stave which does not join the primary alliteration. Most of these 'other' a-verse staves are semantically less important, but some of them carry as much as or more semantic weight than the staves with primary alliteration (e.g. 215, 335, 1230, 1654, 1727 below). This also suggests that the primary function of the last stave in the patterns *ab/ab* and *ab/ba* is compensatory and serves to maintain and enhance the sense of unity between the half-lines through sound. However, the *Gawain* poet seems, as we shall see shortly, occasionally to exploit the last stave to give compensatory alliterative emphasis, through secondary alliteration, to a word that occurs at this position or at one of the a-verse staves that does not join the line-internal alliteration.[18] Further elaboration of this pattern is observable in patterns like *(a)ab/ab* and *(a)ab/ba*. These elaborations may also suggest that the poet was at ease using the *ab/ab* (*ab/ba*) pattern. The following lines seem to me the most convincing evidence of the *ab/ab* (*ab/ba*) pattern:[19]

210	Þe lenkþe of an *e*lnȝerde	þe large hede *h*ade[20]	(elnȝerde, hade)
215	Þat watz wounden wyth *y*rn	to þe wandez *e*nde	(yrn, ende)
377	Þen carppez to Sir *G*awan	þe knyȝt in þe *g*rene	(Gawan, grene)*
906	And hit watz **W**awen hymself	þat in þat won *s*yttez	(himself, syttez)
1223	Ȝe schal not **r**ise of your *b*edde	I **r**ych yow *b*etter[21]	(bedde, better)
1251	Bot hit ar ladyes in*n*oȝe	þat leuer wer *n*owþe	(innoȝe, nowþe)
1727	**O**fte he watz *r*unnen at	when he out *r*ayked	(runnen, rayked)
1909	And þer bayen *h*ym	mony braþ *h*oundez	(hym, houndez)
2249	When þou wypped of my *h*ede	at a wap *o*ne	(hede, one)

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[18] See 1.2.5 below.

[19] Emboldened are words on which primary alliteration (i.e. alliteration which involves the head stave of the b-verse and which usually carries more semantic weight) falls, and items in bracket are alliterating words that (except lines 215, 335, 1230, 1654 and 1727) seem to be compensatory in function.

[20] The line is an emendation from MS *Þe hede of an elnȝerde þe large lenkþe hade* (which scans *aa/xa*).

[21] The b-verse is unmetrical as it stands, lacking its obligatory long dip.

90	And *a*lso an oþer maner	meued him *e*ke	(also, eke)*
335	And wyth a *c*ountenaunce dry3e	he dro3 doun his *c*ote	(countenaunce, cote)
345	Þa*t* I wythoute vylanye	my3t voyde þis *t*able	(Þat I [elision], table)
350	Þa3 3e 3ourself be talenttyf	to take hit to yourseluen	(3ourself, yourseluen)
1187	*H*it watz þe ladi	loflyest to be*h*olde	(Hit, beholde)*
1230	And now 3e ar *h*ere, iwysse	and we bot oure one	(here, one)
1402	And *s*yþen by þe chymné	in chamber þay *s*eten	(syþen, seten)
1528	*Why*, ar 3e lewed	þat alle þe los *w*eldez	(Why, weldez)
1654	At þe *s*oper and after	mony aþel *s*ongez	(soper, songes)
2202	A*s* one vpon a gryndelston	hade grounden a *s*yþe	(As one[elision], syþe)
2245	And we ar *i*n þis valay	verayly oure *o*ne	(ar *or* in, one)

Notes:

377 The poem has some possible instances of alliteration /k/ and /g/, but there are more lines which suggest that the poet is treating /k/ and /g/ as two distinct sounds which do not alliterate within a line (see p. 43-5 below).

90 Some metrists may argue that this line can be scanned as alliterating on *n* (elision alliteration between *an* and *oþer*), *m*, and *m*, thus producing the standard *aa/ax* pattern; see p. 202, n. 10 below. Alternatively, the line could be rendered as *xa/aa*, with elision between 'him' and 'eke'.

1187 *Hit* seems to be given metrical stress at 1922 ('And þenne þay helden to home for hit watz nie3 ny3t') and, perhaps, 2414 ('Bot hit is no ferly þa3 a fole madde'—in which stress on 'Bot' or 'no' is eqaully possible) as well. Duggan cites *C* 225 ('Hit watz not for a halyday honestly arayed') as an instance of *hit* with alliterative stress ('Meter', 112), though I think stress on 'not' is more likely.

Line 2445 may be a little controversial:

2445	Berti*l*ak de Hautdesert	I hat in þis *l*onde	(Bertilak, londe)

This line may be scanned *xa/ax* (see p. 31 above), metrical stress falling on its first syllable ('Bertilak') rather than the third syllable ('Bertilak'). But stress on the last syllable for a trisyllabic French derivative is quite common, and therefore it is possible that the line reads *ab/ba*.

1.2.2 *(a)ab/ab* or *(a)ab/ba* pattern

In the next examples, the a-verse reads *(a)ax*, the pattern which I will discuss in the next chapter.[22] I suggest the lines should be scanned as *(a)ab/ab* or *(a)ab/ba*:

421	Gauan gripped to his *a*x	and gederes hit on *h*y3t	(ax, hy3t)
1589	Þe swyn settez hym *o*ut	on þe segge *e*uen	(out, euen)
1610	With bred blent þer*w*ith	his braches re*w*ardez	(þerwith, rewardez)
1634	And let lodly þer*a*t	þe lorde for to *h*ere	(þerat, here)
1701	A kenet *k*ryes þerof	þe hunt on hym *c*alles	(kryes, calles)[23]

Again, primary alliteration (i.e. alliteration involving the head-stave) falls almost always on elements which are semantically heavier than the other pairs.

1.2.3 Similar patterns involving compounds

The following lines include a compound, one of whose elements can be stress-subordinated:[24]

67	3e3ed 3eres-3iftes on *h*i3	3elde hem bi *h*ond	(hi3, hond)[25]
111	Boþe þe *k*ynges sistersunes	and ful siker *k*ni3tes	(kynges, kni3tes)
293	I quit-clayme hit for *e*uer	kepe hit as his *a*uen	(euer, auen)
1137	By þat *a*ny dayly3t	lemed vpon *e*rþe	(any, erþe)[26]

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[22] See 2.2.2 below.

[23] Syntactic transposition (i.e. *calles on hym þe hunt*) could yield an *(a)ab/ab* line.

[24] As I shall discuss in Chapters III and V, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a given noun-noun (e.g. 'sistersunes', 'daylyȝt') or genitive-noun ('ȝeres-ȝiftes') phrase should be treated as one word (i.e. a pure compound) or a noun + noun (or genitive + noun) combination, which, like the adjective + noun combination, consists of two separate elements in a *crowded* verse but occupies only one stave; the judgement affects the scansion in some cases (for instance, line 111a can be regarded as either a standard or a crowded verse, depending on one treats 'sistersunes' as one word or a noun + noun combination); see pp. 223-4 below.

[25] For stress assignment in crowded a-verses, see Chapter II.

[26] Stress on 'By' is also possible; see p. 28 above.

1.2.4 Other variations: *(a)xb/ba, (a)bb/ba, a(b)a/ba*

In the following examples, the crowded a-verse does not involve a compound nor an adjective + noun combination:

1372	Thenne co*m*aunded þe lorde in þat sale	to samen alle þe *m*eny
2230	*S*ette þe stele to þe stone	and stalked by*s*yde
1682	For þe lur may *m*on lach	when-so *m*on lykez[27]

With the application of the 'spacing' rule operating in crowded a-verses—a rhythmic rule governing crowded a-verses (which I shall fully discuss in the following chapters)—I scan the above lines as *(a)xb/ba*, *(a)bb/ba*, and *a(b)a/ba*.

1.2.5 Other variant patterns observed in crowded a-verses involving an adjective + noun combination

1) *a...a(b)/ab* (or *x...a(b)/ab*), *a...(a)b/ab*, and *a...b(a)/ab* patterns[28]

The following lines have secondary alliteration between the combination element (whether adjective or noun) which does not join the line-internal alliteration and the last-stave word—both annotated as *b*. It seems that secondary alliteration is here exploited to bestow compensatory *alliterative* prominence to these words, which are semantically as important as or (in the case of line 1673) more important than the words that alliterate line-internally:

663	Ryally wyth red ***golde***	vpon rede ***gowlez***	(golde)
2035	Þe gordel of þe grene ***silke***	þat gay wel ***bisemed***	(silke)
1495	My fay, quoþ þe meré ***wyf***,	ȝe may not be ***werned***	(werned)
370	And gef hym Goddez ***blessyng***	and gladly hym ***biddes***	(blessing)
1673	And sayde As I am ***trwe*** segge	I siker my ***trawþe***	(trwe)

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[27] Syntactic transposition ('when-so lykez mon') could restore the line to *a(b)a/ab*; cf.1701 ('A kenet kryes þerof þe hunt on hym calles').

[28] I use the notational mark '...' to indicate an interval between the non-combination element and the adjective + noun combination. For the scansion of the a-verses presented here, see 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 below.

2430 Þat wyl I welde wyth *guod* wylle not for þe wynne ***golde*** (guod)

It seems that alliteration in this poem often responds to the needs of semantic demand, highlighting significant elements of sense in the narrative. Instances like those above inevitably lead us to reconsider the function of alliteration in *Sir Gawain* and speculate that alliteration and stress, however closely they are correlated with each other, are treated as two different systems in this poem. I will return to this issue in Chapter VI.

There is only one example of this type—here, annotated as *a...(a)b/ab*—which does not involve any key word:[29]

113 And Ywan, Vryn *son* ette with ***hymseluen*** (son)

2) *(a)b...b/ax*

The following crowded a-verses involve an adjective + noun combination or compound adverb. The first component is stress-subordinated in the a-verse,[30] but its sound repeated in the head stave of the b-verse. Thus the lines can be formulated as *(a)b...b/ax* (or *(a)bb/ax*), which could be a variant of *ab/ab* (*ab/ba*):

60 Wyle *Nw* ȝer watz so ȝep þat hit watz new cummen
541 Bot *neuer* þe lece ne þe later þay neuened bot merþe
656 Now alle þese *fyue syþez*, for soþe, were fetled on þis knyȝt

I have argued that in *Sir Gawain*, the minimum requirement of alliteration seems to be that the line has two alliterative stresses that cross the caesura. Here, line-internal alliteration (or primary alliteration) falls in the a-verse on the *stress-subordinated element*, and therefore, strictly speaking, the lines above lack two such alliterative stresses crossing the caesura. However, the subordinated word in the above examples is, in each case, an adjective + noun combination element—which I have suggested (and shall argue in Chapter III) can be treated as a single metrical unit in which either element can bear ictus—or an element of the compound adverb ('neuer þe lece'), which can also be regarded as constituting one metrical unit and thus be comparable to the

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[29] See also p. 85 below.
[30] For stress assignment and the stress-subordination rule for crowded a-verses, see Chapters II and III below.

adjective + noun combination. It seems that lines lacking two alliterative stresses crossing the caesura are metrically permissible if the a-verse has a constituent that is stress-subordinated but joins the line-internal alliteration (i.e. alliterated with the word bearing the first b-verse stress) and if *this constituent is an element of an adjective + noun combination or of a compound.* I will return to this issue in Chapter III, where I examine the adjective + noun combination and its variants in more detail.[31]

1.3 Other non-standard alliterative patterns

1.3.1 *aa/xa* and its valiant [*(a)ax/xa, (a)aa/xa, a(a)x/xa*] patterns

D. Lawton and A. T. E. Matonis defend some of the lines with the *aa/xa* pattern.[32] However, Duggan appears to view lines with the *aa/xa* pattern in poems written in unrhymed alliterative long lines as scribal. I used to believe that the head stave of the b-verse plays an essential role in establishing the alliteration of a line, and that the failure to give it alliterative stress could slacken the cohesion between the half-lines and disturb the audience's understanding of the metre. In *Sir Gawain*, however, while most of the lines with *aa/xa* pattern, as is the case with the other alliterative poems, can be restored to those with the *aa/ax* pattern by changing the syntax, a few cannot, or, if transposed, would produce a syntactically less unnatural and difficult half-line, and *difficilior lectio* is unlikely to be scribal. All lines make reasonable sense as they stand. Some of them, as T. Turville-Petre argued in his *Alliterative Revival* (though he appears to have modified this view later), could be defended on stylistic grounds,[33] though the

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[31] See also 1.3.3 below. There are two other instances in *Sir Gawain* in which a stress-subordinated combination element is the only constituent (in the a-verse) that joins the line-internal alliteration: 'And I schulde at þis New 3ere 3eply þe quyte' (2244), 'And 3e schal in þis New 3er a3ayn to my wonez' (2400). The lines alliterate on 3; but stress seems to fall in the a-verse on 'shulde' and 'New' (2244) and 'schal' and 'New' (2244), and '3er' is, in each case, stress-subordinated (thus annotated as *x...x(a)/ax*). To these two cases may also be added line 332 ('Þe stif mon hym bifore stod vpon hy3t') in which the first a-verse stress seems to be falling on 'mon', thus stress-subordinating the alliterating adjective element 'stif', *unless* the pre-caesural stress falls on the first (rather than the more usual second) syllable of 'bifore'. For the scansion of this line and lines 2244 and 2400 above, see pp. 90-1 below.

[32] Lawton, 'The Unity', 72-94; 'The Diversity, 143-72; Matonis, 'A Reexamination', 339-60; 'Non-*Aa/ax* patterns', 134-149.

[33] T. Turville-Petre, *The Alliterative Revival*, 54. His argument for the authenticity of the *aa/xa* pattern here is later replaced by one expressing suspicion of a great deal of textual corruption in *Sir Gawain*; see his article 'Editing *The Wars of Alexander*', *Manuscripts and Texts: Editorial Problems in Later Middle English Literature*, ed. D. Pearsall (Cambridge, 1987), 143-60.

others do not seem to involve any stylistic consideration. Considering the fact that this alliterative pattern occurs 27 times in the poem, it may be that at least some of the lines are authentic. I will first list the lines which could allow syntactic transposition:

263	And here is kydde cortaysye	as I haf *h*erde carp
475	For I haf sen a selly	I *m*ay not forsake
493	Thaȝ hym wordez were wane	when þay to *s*ete wenten
1005	And syþen þurȝ al þe sale	as hem *b*est semed
1133	Þe leue lorde of þe londe	*w*atz not þe last[34]
1462	Hurtez hem ful heterly	þer he *f*orth hyȝez
1939	In cheuisaunce of þis chaffer	ȝif ȝe hade *g*oud chepez
2083	Schyre schaterande on schorez	þer þay *d*oun schowued
2095	And ȝe ar a lede vpon lyue	þat I *w*el louy
2131	I were a knyȝt kowarde	I *m*yȝt not be excused
2143	Haf here þi helme on þy hede	þi *sp*ere in þi honde
2197	With heȝe helme on his hede	his *l*aunce in his honde
2467	Þerefore I eþe þe, haþel	to *c*om to þyn aunt

In the following lines, transposition is possible, and would produce syntactically simpler reading. But it seems very unlikely that the scribe transformed a line with a natural word order into one with a more unusual order:

953	Rugh ronkled *ch*ekez	þat *o*þer on rolled
983	Hent heȝly of his hode	and on a *sp*ere henged
1835	Þaȝ hit vnworþi were	þat he hit *t*ake wolde

In the lines below, no transposition readily suggests itself because either the syntactic construction does not allow such transposition—e.g. restrictive relative clause ('bi hym þat me wroȝt' 399) and the prepositional phrase involving a compound noun ('on þe bed-syde' 1193)—or the transposition would violate the b-verse rule by creating two long dips—477, *þat hatz hewen innogh*—or no long dip—547, *bot trifel neuer*:

155	With blyþe blaunner ful bryȝt	and his *h*od boþe
399	I wot neuer where þou wonyes	bi *h*ym þat me wroȝt

[34] Here and lines such as 2083, 2197, and 953 involve crowded a-verses scanning *(a)aa*, *a(a)x*, etc., but the b-verse is not affected. See Chapters II and III for the scansion of these a-verses.

477	Now sir, **h**eng vp þyn **a**x	þat hatz in*n*ogh **h**ewen
547	To telle yow **t**enez þer*o*f	***n***euer bot **t**rifel
1115	Þise **l**ordez and **l**adyez	***q***uyle þat hem **l**yked
1193	And **s**et hir ful **s**oftly	on þe ***b***ed-**s**yde

If the authenticity of the pattern can be admitted, the b-verses in the following lines should read *xa*, with stress on 'all' rather than 'þurȝ', which would make the line *aa/aa*:

645	His þro þoȝt watz in þat	þurȝ ***a***lle oþer þynges
1080	Now I þonk yow þryuandely	þurȝ ***a***lle oþer þynge

Similarly, the lines below should perhaps be scanned as *aa/xa*, with the third ictus falling on 'not' (or 'arn'), 'wyth*i*nne', and 'forth' rather than *aa/aa*, in which the first b-verse stress falls on 'wel', '***w***thinne', and 'þer':

1094	And syþen waked me wyth	ȝe arn not wel waryst
1435	Wyȝez, whyl þay wysten wel	wyth***i***nne hem hit were
2397	Þenk vpon þis ilke þrepe	þer þou ***f***orth þryngez[35]

1.3.2 *xa/aa* and *ax/aa* patterns

The following lines have one alliterative stress in the a-verse and two in the b-verse. They may be corrupt or defective, but if the authenticity of the *ax/ax* (*xa/ax*) pattern can be assumed, *xa/aa* and *ax/aa* could also be regarded as variants of this pattern. In these cases, the last stave serves to provide the line with compensatory alliteration. The first five examples are *xa/aa*, followed by those of *ax/aa*:

311	***Wh***ere is now your sour**qu**ydrye	and your con**qu**estes
461	Neuer ***m***ore þen þay wyste	from **qu**eþen he watz wonnen
867	Wel***n***eȝ to vche **h**aþel	**a**lle on **h**wes[36]
938	And ***s***ayde he watz þe welcomest	wyȝe of þe worlde
2378	***L***o! þer þe falssyng	foule mot hit falle

[35] Cf. 1462 ('Hurtez hem ful heterly þer he ***f***orth hyȝez').
[36] This b-verse is unmetrical as it stands, lacking a long dip.

1406 Wat **ch**aunce so by*t*ydez hor **ch**euysaunce to **ch**aunge

1679 For I haf fraysted þe *t*wys and faythful I fynde þe

Aliteration between French *qu* (e.g. 'sour**qu**ydrye' and '**qu**estes' at 311 above) (or OE. *cw*) with /k/ is also attested at 975 ('Þay kallen hym of aquoyntaunce and he hit quyk askez'), 578 ('Queme quyssewes þen þat coyntlych closed'), and 469 ('To þe comlych queen with cortays speche'). As the reflexes of OE. *hw* and *cw* (and French *qu*) do not alliterate in *Sir Gawain* (though they do seem to do so in *The Wars of Alexander*[37]), line 311 must scan *xa/aa*. In this manuscript, *w* can alliterate with *wh* (OE. *hw*), often spelt *qu*, as in line 461 above.[38]

1.3.3 *(a)x.x/aa*

1965 For I mot nedes, as ȝe wot meue to-morne

This line is another instance in which the two a-verse stresses do not join the line-internal alliteration, which falls here on the stress-subordinated element at verse-opening. As 'mot nedes' is a common idiomatic phrase, it can also be treated as one metrical unit. Thus the stress-subordinated element 'mot' serves to provide with the a-verse the only alliteration that crosses the caesura.[39]

1.4. Alliteration between non-identical consonants

1.4.1 /k/ and /g/

The poem has some possible instances of alliteration between /g/ and /k/—voiced and unvoiced stops—though these are not clear examples, if one assumes the authenticity of the *ax/ax* (*xa/ax*) pattern. The following are the possible examples of /k/ and /g/

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[37] e.g. *WA* 5420 ('Quirland all on queles quen þe quene entres'), *WA* 4787 ('For so þe qwele of qwistounes ȝoure qualite encreses'), etc.; see also Duggan and T. Turville-Petre, eds. *The Wars of Alexander* (1989), xxxvii.

[38] See, for instance, lines 224 ('Þe fyrst word þat he warp, Wher is, he sayd') and 1573 ('Whettez his whyte tuschez with hym þen irked').

[39] See also lines with *(a)b...b/ax* on pp. 39-40 above.

alliterating within a line:

454	Þe kniȝt of þe grene chapel	men knowen me mony
633	Gawan watz for gode knawen	and as golde pured
2491	Þat gode Gawayn watz commen	gayn hit hym þoȝt

Interestingly, all the three lines above have a voiced/unvoiced counterpart of the alliterating sound at the second a-verse stave rather than at the head stave of the b-verse, which would be decisive evidence for the alliteration between /k/ and /g/.[40] In addition, it is more likely that line 633 has second metrical stress on 'gode' rather than on 'knawen'; although 'gode knawen' does not form an adjective + noun combination,[41] the latter word is linked syntactically very closely to 'gode' by the preposition 'for', which has the effect of anticipating the occurrence of the past participle after the alliterating adjective 'gode'.[42] On the other hand, there are some examples which suggest distinction between /k/ and /g/ in this poem at least:

283	Forþy I craue in þis court	a Crystemas gomen
577	Aboute his knez knaged	wyth knotez of golde
683	As knyȝtez in cauelaciounz	on Crystmasse gomnez
1127	Gestes þat go wolde	hor gromez þay calden
1376	And al godly in gomen	Gawayn he called
2365	So is Gawayn, in god fayth,	bi oþer gay knyȝtez
2413	Þat þus hor knyȝt wyth hor kest	han koyntly bigyled

The pattern of three /k/s followed by /g/ at the last stave is strong evidence of the distinction between the two sounds. The above examples should therefore be read as *aa/ax* rather than *aa/aa*. Similarly, at 337:

337	Þen carppez to Sir Gawan	þe knyȝt in þe grene

Considering the probable authenticity of lines with *ab/ab* (*ab/ba*) in this poem, the line should read *ab/ab* rather than *aa/aa*.

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[40] For instance, alliteration between *f* and *v* in this text is confirmed by line 1375 ('Verayly his venysoun to fech hym byforne') in which two *v*s in the a-verse is followed by *f* in the head stave of the b-verse; *ch* alliterates with *j* at 86 ('He watz so joly of his joyfnes and sumquat childgered'), *sch* with *ch* at 1081 ('Now acheued is my chaunce I schal at your wylle').

[41] For full discussion on adjective + noun combinations and their variations, see 3.1 and 5.5 below.

[42] In Chapter II, I examine the pre-caesural position and formulate a rule that I think is operative at that position.

Although I argue for the distinction between /k/ and /g/, there are many combinations of words with these sounds recurring in this poem: 'grene knyȝt', 'good knyȝt', 'Crystmasse gomen', etc. Apparently, the poet is exploiting their almost identical sound qualities to strengthen the semantic link between words with these sounds,[43] thus giving the phrase a touch of suggestiveness and memorableness. In the *metrical* structure, however, /k/ and /g/ seem to be treated, in *Sir Gawain*, as two distinct sounds.

1.4.2 /s/ and /ʃ/

N. Davis suggests that alliteration between /s/ and /ʃ/ was, in some cases, permissible in *Sir Gawain*.[44] As was the case with /k/ and /g/, there is some evidence against the alliteration between *sch* and *s* in this text. The text has the following possible instances of alliteration between these two consonants:

956	Schon schyrer þen snawe	þat schedez on hillez
1593	Set sadly þe scharp	in þe slot euen
2332	Sette þe schaft vpon schore	and to þe scharp lened

None of the above examples has an instance of two /ʃ/s or two /s/s in the a-verse followed by /s/ or /ʃ/ in the head stave of the b-verse. The head stave of the b-verse in the lines above is always alliterated with the two a-verse open-class words sharing the same initial consonant (e.g. 'schedez' in the head stave alliterating with 'Schon' and 'schyrer' in the a-verse). Corroborative evidence can be found at 205, 213, and 2161 below, in which three /ʃ/s are followed by /s/ at the last stave, and at 1467, where a similar pattern (two /s/s + *sw* followed by the last stave /ʃ/) occurs:

205	Ne no schafte ne no schelde	to schwue ne to smyte
213	As wel schapen to schere	as scharp rasores
2161	Schowuez in bi a schore	at a schaȝe syde
1467	Suande þis wylde swyn	til þe sunne schafted

As was the case with /k/ and /g/, the lines here and above serve as evidence to show that

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[43] For the alliteration for this purpose, see 6.1, especially, pp. 260-1.

[44] 'yet in some lines, it [*sch*] is linked with *s*, as 956, 1593, and perhaps 205, 431, etc.' (Davis, 151). I do not included 431 ('Bot styþly he start forth vpon styf schonkes') in the list above, because the line

/s/ and /ʃ/ are, in *Sir Gawain*, treated as two distinct sounds that do not alliterate together.

1.5 Conclusion

I have examined the lines with the non-*aa/ax* patterns in *Sir Gawain* to consider whether these lines should be regarded as inauthentic and therefore assumed to require emendation. The following are the figures for all the non-standard alliterative pattens found in the poem.[45] I will present the number of the lines in which a given pattern occurs, which is followed by a percentage in relation to the total number of lines (i.e. 2025 lines):

ax/ax (*xa/ax*): 110 (5.43%)
ab/ab (*ab/ba*) and its variants: 41 (2.02%)
aa/xa and its variants: 27 (1.33%)
xa/aa and *ax/aa*: 8 (0.40%)

Total:186 (9.19%).[46]

It is worth repeating again that 80 (72.07%) out of 110 lines with *ax/ax* (or *xa/ax*) are given what I call 'metrical compensation'—that is, compensatory cross-line alliteration between a line with only one alliterative stress in the a-verse and an adjacent line—and that this compensatory technique may be serving to produce some conformity with lines with the standard *aa/ax* pattern. Also, non-standard alliterative patterns like those observable in this poem are not infrequent in rhymed alliterative stanzaic poems such as *The Awntyrs off Arthure*,[47] and the poem has a similar stanzaic form with rhymes concluding the stanza-like paragraphs of irregular length. Moreover, these non-*aa/ax* patterns occur 9.19% of the lines in *Sir Gawain*, and most of them do not, except for their deviant alliterative patterns, have anything suspect in terms of sense and rhythm.

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alliterates on *st*, which as a rule alliterates only with itself.

[45] I exclude *aa/bb* ('Of such a selly soiorne as I haf hade here' 1962) and *aa/xx* ('As is pertly payed þe chepez þat I aȝte' 1941), in which alliteration does not cross the caesura; the other instances of *aa/xx* (236, 343, 958, 971, 1030, 1208, 1440, 1906) have been emended to the regular *aa/ax*; see Davis, 150).

[46] This figure excludes 10 lines with *aa/(a)xx* (i.e. 344, 987, 1268, 1296, 1380, 1422, 1964, 2053, 2325, 2446), which are possible instances of a mute stave, which I will discuss in 2.7 below.

Considering these points, it seems probable that the variant alliterative patterns found in this poem are authentic, and that the poet was prepared to use them even without any compensatory alliteration. I have also demonstrated that in *Sir Gawain*, /k/ and /g/, and /s/ and /ʃ/—pairs of non-identical consonants which are often assumed to alliterate with each other—are, in fact, treated as two distinct sounds which do not alliterate.

[47] See p. 34-5 above.

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CHAPTER II

STRESS ASSIGNMENT AND STRESS-SUBORDINATION RULE

2.1 Crowded a-verses

Many lines in *Sir Gawain* have crowded a-verses, which have three or more possible ictus positions. Here is an example:

His legez lapped in stel with luflych greuez (575)

Traditional scansion would render this line as *aa/ax*, alliterating on 'legez' and 'lapped', and the line would thus be regarded as regular. With Duggan's formulation, the a-verse would be scanned as *aax*, a verse with two alliterative stresses and one non-alliterative stress. But since I assume a two-stress verse as an underlying rhythmic principle, at least in the three alliterative poems of the Cotton Nero manuscript, and the importance of the caesura as a boundary marker, I render the a-verse in question as *(a)ax*,[1] which is slightly different from both scansions above. In this chapter, therefore, I will focus on the rhythm of the poem, and discuss how these crowded a-verses should be scanned in relation to stress and alliteration.

In crowded a-verses, two of the (usually) three open-class words often form a combination of adjective + noun, which can be treated metrically as a single metrical unit; either element can carry metrical stress, the phrase constituting one stave.[2] Therefore, the possible three staves in the a-verse can, in many cases, be reduced to two, subordinating one. The adjective + noun combination is most frequently seen in otherwise regular *aa/ax* lines, and this tendency is widely attested in other alliterative poems in the same tradition. In addition to an adjective + noun combination, such combinations as genitive + noun, noun + noun, and adverb + verb may also be treated in the same way because of their relatively strong grammatical link.[3] In this chapter, I will

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[1] For the notational method here adopted, see n. 12 below.

[2] See Chapter III.

[3] When J. Turville-Petre analyses the 'syntactic combinations' that form the 'accentual patterns' of the verse (313), she is using the term 'combination' in a broader sense, which includes any combination of main constituents of a line (i.e. subject, verb, object or complement, adverb and adverbial phrase); she treats, for example, the combination of noun and verb ('the subject preceding a verb-phrase') as one of the combinations that occur at the line-opening and have the first element in the opening prelude (unstressed position).

first treat crowded a-verses, which may or may not include a combination, and consider whether there are any 'rules' governing the structure of the crowded a-verses. I will also examine the distribution of closed-class words—such as prepositions and pronouns—in the long line, especially at verse-ending positions (i.e. line-closure and pre-caesural position). In the next chapter, I will pay special attention to the above-mentioned combinations, and discuss how they are distributed in the two half-lines and see whether any exception to the rules operating in the crowded a-verse has to be made.

2.2 Stress-subordination of the initial open-class word

2.2.1 *(a)aa/ax* pattern

The following line has three alliterating open-class words in the a-verse. Since I regard the caesura as playing a crucial role in signalling a metrical and (normally) syntactic break at the medial point of a line,[4] stress on the last sense unit before the caesura is the norm. The first open-class element occurs in the 'prelude' ('prehead') so that it is naturally assimilated into the introductory long dip before the initial metrical stress.[5] Here is the example:[6]

Þe *bor3* brittened and brent to brondez and askez (2)

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[4] It seems that the structural significance of the caesura is not particularly emphasised in J. Turville-Petre. Duggan re-emphasises its importance: see Duggan, 'Meter', 228 and also n. 12. For the argument that the caesura is not a structural feature of the alliterative verse, see R. Sapora, *A Theory of Middle English Alliterative Metre with Critical Applications*, MA. Speculum Anniversary Monographs 1 (Cambridge, 1977), C. B. Hieatt, 'The Rhythm of the Alliterative Long Line', in *Chaucer and Middle English Studies in Honour of Rossell Hope Robbins*, ed. Rowland, B. (London, 1974), 119-30; A. Schiller, 'The *Gawain* Rhythm', *Language and Style* 1 (1968), 268-94; J. T. Stillings, 'A Generative Metrical Analysis of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *Language and Style* IX (1976), 219-46.

[5] T. Turville-Petre also mentions the frequent natural assimilation of the first open-class word into the 'unstressed prelude' of the line (*The Alliterative Revival*, 55).

[6] The other examples in this text are: 61, 87, 154, 235, 257, 344, 372, 375, 428, 429, 447, 495, 498, 503, 509, 526, 546, 643, 654, 676, 720, 734, 787, 842, 845, 846, 849, 857, 887, 920, 935, 936, 970, 971, 982, 997, 1110, 1151, 1159, 1233, 1276, 1282, 1320, 1361, 1422, 1425, 1456, 1465, 1479, 1519, 1541, 1563, 1586, 1588, 1603, 1623, 1639, 1651, 1693, 1695, 1698, 1711, 1783, 1900, 1906, 1924, 1925, 1999, 2003, 2012, 2018, 2041, 2056, 2057, 2061, 2080, 2082, 2083, 2098, 2130, 2153, 2175, 2292, 2293, 2298, 2322, 2332, 2390, 2492, 2513. Instances of *(a)aa* in which the second metrical stress falls on (disyllabic) adverbs are treated in the section 2.2.2 for my argument's sake. Also excluded from the list are a-verses with *(a)aa* involving verse-opening adjective + noun combinations (68 instances), which will be treated in the next chapter.

The 'prelude' is usually occupied by function words such as definite or indefinite articles and conjunctions. But as in lines like one above, an open-class word can be included in this unstressed opening. David Crystal argues that an open-class word in this position is 'pronounced with slight "inherent stress", so that it is louder than the surrounding unstressed syllables'.[7] Therefore, the unstressed element is *metrically* subordinated, but still retains this 'inherent' (i.e. linguistic) stress. What is particularly noticeable about the quoted line and others of the same type is the fact that all have a *long dip*—two or more unstressed syllables—between the first and second *metrical* stresses.[8]

2.2.2 *(a)ax/ax* pattern

There are many crowded a-verses which contain two alliterating open-class words and one un-alliterating open-class word occurring just before the caesura. J. Turville-Petre points out that, apart from a few instances of verb + adverb, an unstressed but semantically heavy word in the final position before the caesura occurs only with the adjective + noun combination.[9] Although she does not, like Duggan, seem to be clearly formulating metrical rules in her article, her condition can be paraphrased as follows: the final major component just before the caesura must bear metrical stress, unless it is part of the combination of adjective + noun or of verb + adverb.[10] These combinations can be, as I have already suggested, treated as constituting one stave only in crowded verses, although Duggan appears to treat such verses as three- (rather than two-) stave verses, except when the combinations occur in the b-verse.[11] However, if read in two-beat rhythm with the second stress falling on the word closest to the caesura, they become *(a)ax* (or *a(a)x*, the pattern which I will treat later), an a-verse with only

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[7] D. Crystal, *Prosodic Systems and Intonation in English* (Cambridge, 1969), 234; J. Turville-Petre makes the same point (J. Turville-Petre, 323).

[8] Lines 375, 429, 643, 498, 787, 1698, 1906, 2003 are cited by J. Turville-Petre (324), who assigns the same stress pattern as I do, and further argues that the opening pattern S (i.e. subject other than pronominal one represented by her as s) + V (full verbs contrasted with v which represent auxiliary verbs and the copula) + Adv or A—giving a verse with three open-class words—is metrically realised most frequently by S being included in the unstressed opening prelude, though retaining 'inherent' stress.

[9] J. Turville-Petre, 320. It is not clear what type of adverb is referred to by 'verb + adverb combination'. If she means derivative adverbs such as adverb with *–ly* or *–e*, I did not find any example in which such adverbs are unstressed at the pre-caesura position. In line 633, the verb participle 'knowen' occurs at the pre-caesural position, but without metrical stress; see my discussion below.

[10] Variations on the adjective + noun combination—such as genitive + noun and noun + noun—could be added to this category; see 3.1 below.

[11] See Introduction (especially, pp. 9-14) for his inconsistent treatment of adjective + noun combinations.

one alliterative stress.[12] For example:

His *legez* lapped in stel with luflych greuez (575)

and other similar lines[13] are 'regular' according to Duggan's metrical rules—two out of three a-verse staves are 'full' (i.e. accompanied by alliteration). But since, as I have already argued,[14] the underlying rhythmic principle of the alliterative long lines is a four-beat rhythm, one of the three open-class words in the a-verse has to be stress-subordinated to the other two. Interestingly, if the first alliterating word is subordinated, the lines all have a resulting long dip—mostly a disyllabic (sometimes trisyllabic) interval—between the initial and final stresses in the first half-line. This regular occurrence of a long dip between the two metrical stresses, which all the lines above demonstrate, is in fact a regular rhythmic feature of crowded a-verses.

In her study on the metre of *Sir Gawain*, J. Turville-Petre convincingly argues that the predominant rhythmic pattern in the poem is in triple time, that is, a disyllabic interval between the two staves (though she uses the term 'accents' instead of 'staves') and that this prevailing rhythm, which she calls the 'standard' rhythm, sometimes alternates with a short-interval rhythm, a monosyllabic or zero interval between the two staves.[15] And I would argue that it is this 'standard' rhythm that plays a crucial role in determining stress assignment in crowded a-verses (and standard a-verses).

The following line also has a long dip between the word bearing the pre-caesural stress and the open-class word that immediately precedes. The pre-caesural stress in lines of this type falls on disyllabic adverbs (or, only occasionally, those with three or more syllables), which are mostly non-derivative adverbs of time, space, or direction:[16]

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[12] For the use of a parenthesis for a subordinated open-class word, I follow T. Turville-Petre (*The Alliterative Revival*, 55).

[13] Other examples are: 67, 418, 485, 506, 858, 956, 959, 1001, 1084, 1313, 1413, 1415, 1446, 1470, 1565, 1572, 1684, 2284, 2292, 2313, 2418, 2446, 2468.

[14] See the introduction.

[15] J. Turville-Petre, 316-7.

[16] See also 65, 73, 76, 219, 401, 470, 600, 795, 856, 981, 1053, 1186, 1906, 2325, 2517. Duggan treats monosyllabic adverbs as closed-class words and adverbs with two or more syllables as open-class words; since his metrical rules would not allow stress-subordination except for a very few special cases (see Introduction), adverbs with two or more syllables—including those treated here—always take stress, regardless of the position in which they occur. In Chapter III, I will examine adverbs (derivative and non-derivative) and demonstrate that syllabic length (as is used by Duggan in his treatment of adverbs) is not, in fact, a reliable guide to determining the word class of a given adverb (see 3.2 below). Here, for the sake of my argument, I treat a-verses involving this type of adverbs at the pre-caesural position separately from those involving pre-caesural nouns, adjectives, etc., which are unambiguously open-class words.

Bischop **B**awdewyn abof **b**iginez þe table (112)

Lines like 254 below follow the same rhythm, though the second metrical stress is here on a *non*-alliterating disyllabic adverb:[17]

Liȝt luflych adoun and lenge, I þe praye (254)

What is particularly noticeable about the lines of this type is that all the adverbs have an unstressed initial syllable, and that nearly all of them serve to produce a long dip between them and the open-class words immediately preceding.[18] Interestingly, when a pre-caesural adverb is monosyllabic or stressed on its first syllable, and when the open-class word immediately preceding is disyllabic (or can be disyllabic with syncopation of /e/ in the inflectional endings), it is always preceded by meaningless intensifiers such as *ful*[19] so that the verse has a long dip between these two words, on which ictus consequently falls:

Ladies laȝed *ful* loude þoȝ þay lost haden (69)
A ȝere ȝernes *ful* ȝerne and ȝeldez neuer lyke (498)
Þe snawe snitered *ful* snart þat snayped þe wylde[20] (2003)

There is only one instance in which a pre-caesural adverb has a trisyllabic stem:

I ne wot in worlde whederwarde to wende hit to fynde (1053)

I would scan this a-verse *(a)aa* in which stress falls on 'worlde' and on the third syllable of 'whederwarde', with consequent subordination of the first open-class word 'wot'. The two initial unstressed syllables 'wheder-' of the adverb serve to create a long dip between this word and monosyllabic 'worlde' so that ictus will fall, as a consequence,

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[17] See also 21, 121, 153, 217, 331, 480, 505, 530, 547, 570, 576, 880, 909, 933, 1142, 1155, 1306, 1325, 1459, 1583, 1610, 1634, 1649, 1701, 1741, 1910, 2029, 2071, 2174, 2514, 2523.

[18] Among all the instances listed here and in n. 17 and n. 18, only five—112a ('Bishop Bawdewyn abof'), 219a ('Wyth tried tasselez þerto'), 331a ('And sturnely sturez hit aboute'), 909a ('Loude laȝed he þerat'), and 2071a ('Þe burne blessed hym bilyue')—have a disyllabic adverb which does not seem to be an essential part of a long dip (i.e. a long dip is achieved by two unstressed syllables preceding the disyllabic adverb); but considering 'Bawdewyn' (112a) and 'tasselez' (219a) can also be taken as disyllabic (rather than trisyllabic), the disyllabic adverb in these two instances, too, may also serve to create a long dip.

[19] For discussion on the poet's use of *ful* for metrical purposes, see 4.4 below.

[20] Here, I take 'snitered' to be disyllabic.

on these words.[21] One might argue that 'whederwarde' can be stressed on its first (instead of third) syllable (in which case, the a-verse would become *a(a)a* with resultant subordination of 'worlde' instead of 'wot'). However, as I shall demonstrate, the head noun in stock prepositional phrases almost always bears ictus in the alliterative long line,[22] and *in (þe/þis) world* is not an exception.[23] It is more likely, therefore, that 'wot' at verse-opening is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the unstressed 'prelude', while metrical stress is borne by 'worlde' and 'whederwarde'.

As was the case with a-verses in which the pre-caesural stress falls on nouns, verbs, and adjectives, the length of the dip between the two a-verse stresses seems here, too, to be playing an important role in marking the placement of stress in a-verses with two open-class words before the one with the pre-caesural stress.

The rule that emerges from all the lines discussed so far seems to be that the first alliterating open-class word is stress-subordinated if and when a long dip occurs between the next open-class word (forming the first stress) and the word with the pre-caesural stress. As J. Turville-Petre perceptively points out, alliteration on the metrically subordinated words signals their semantic weight.[24] More importantly, however, this introductory alliteration serves to provide with compensatory alliteration a first half-line that has three possible ictus positions but only one alliterative stress, as in all lines with the *(a)ax/ax* and *a(a)x/ax* patterns (the latter of which will be discussed later), and thereby to fulfil the alliterative expectations of the listener.

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[21] Cf. *C* 316 ('Of fifty fayre ouerþwert forme þe brede') and *P* 382 ('Sewed a sekke þerabof and syked ful colde'), in which the first two unstressed syllables of the pre-caesural adverbs ('ouer-' and 'þera-') serve, as here, to create a long dip after the monosyllabic open-class words ('fayre', 'sekke'), on which the first metrical ictus consequently falls.

[22] See 4.1 below for detailed discussion on prepositional phrases and their metrical function.

[23] There are 9 other instances in the manuscript in which the stock prepositional phrase *in (the/this) world* occurs, and in each case, *world(e* bears ictus, which is also accompanied by alliteration: *SG* 997 ('Wele waxez in vche a won *in worlde* for his sake'), 1781 ('Bifore alle þe wyȝez *in þe world* wounded in hert'), 2321 ('Watz he neuer *in þis world* wyȝe half so blyþe'), 2479 ('Wylde wayez *in þe worlde* Wowen now rydez'); *Cleanness* 252 ('Þat þen wonyed *in þe worlde* withouten any maysterȝ'), 293 ('Þenne *in worlde* watȝ a wyȝe wonyande on lyue'), 548 ('Tyl any water *in þe worlde* to wasche þe fayly'), 1123 ('And wax ho euer *in þe worlde* in weryng so olde'); *Patience* 202 (Whyder *in worlde* þat þou wylt and what is þyn arnde'). There is only one instance (in *SE* 186a) in which *in world*, occurring at the verse-opening position of a crowded a-verse ('*In worlde* quat weghe þou was and quy þow þus ligges'), is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the opening unstressed prelude.

[24] 'The extra alliteration is functional, for it signals a major component; but one which is rhythmically subordinated and does not bear metrical accent' (J. Turville-Petre, 320); cf.: 'Alliteration of [an open-class word occurring at verse-opening, and functioning as a subject] is usual, but it must be regarded as subsidiary enrichment, consonant with the weight of the syllable which has been metrically relegated' (325). I take 'the weight of the syllable' to mean 'the semantic weight' that the open-class word (or 'major constituent') possesses.

2.2.3 *(x)aa/ax, (a)xa/ax* patterns

Lines of the following type show the same rhythmic pattern (i.e. a long dip between the pre-caesural stress and the open-class word immediately preceding, on which the first a-verse stress consequently falls, stress-subordinating the first open-class word at verse-opening), though the subordinated elements are non-alliterating open-class words; for example:[25]

My *hede* flaȝ to my fote and ȝet flaȝ I neuer (2276)

Open-class words in some of these lines have such light semantic weight that they are better regarded as common 'function' elements (i.e. virtually closed-class words), as shown below:

He *let* no semblaunt be sene bot sayde ful hyȝe (468)
And *cum* to þat merk at mydmorn to make quat yow likez (1073)
And *hatz* þe penaunce apert of þe point of myn egge (2392)
And he *made* a fare on þat fest for þe frekez sake (537)
So *sayde* þe lorde of þat lede þay laȝed vchone (1113)

These a-verses and other similar verses[26] may be better interpreted as non-crowded (i.e. standard) a-verses that have only two possible ictus positions and thus involve no stress-subordination. However, when the word bearing the pre-caesural stress does not alliterate, as in lines like 'Let þe ladiez be fette to lyke hem þe better' (1084) and 'And made myry al day, til þe mone rysed' (1313), the semantically light open-class words at verse-opening (in these cases, 'let' and 'made') are alliterated and become a candidate for stress (and therefore subject to stress-subordination). The significant point about verses with *(x)aa/ax* here and those above or verses with *(a)xa/ax* (see below) pattern is the fact that they, too, have a long dip between the word bearing the pre-caesural stress and the word immediately preceding, on which the first a-verse stress, as a consequence, falls.

Verses of the following type have the same rhythmic structure, but their initial a-verse stress falls on the *non*-alliterating item, subordinating the preceding *alliterating*

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[25] See also 448, 549, 850, 1754, 1776, 1928, 2393.
[26] See also 226, 252, 323, 330, 325, 420, 497, 673, 751, 773, 1160, 1252, 1257, 1302, 1571, 1582, 1681, 1782, 1809, 1840, 2051, 2109, 2134, 2143, 2164, 2170, 2180, 2230, 2247, 2266.

component. These lines are therefore here formulated as *(a)xa/ax*. Here is an example:[27]

Wayued his berde for to wayte quo-so wolde ryse (306)

The evidence to support this scansion will be presented in Chapter IV; here it suffices to point out that alliteration and metrical stress do not always coincide, and that an alliterating open-class word may, as here, be stress-subordinated to a non-alliterating one in crowded verses.

From all the examples above, one underlying rhythmic principle emerges: if a long dip—two or more unstressed syllables—occurs between the word bearing the pre-caesural stress and the one that immediately precedes, the first open-class element is assimilated into the opening dip; if there would be just a short or no dip, then the first a-verse stress falls on the first (non)-alliterating component, subordinating the second.

2.3 Stress-subordination of the second open-class word

2.3.1 *a(a)a/ax* or *a(x)a/ax* patterns

Let us now examine crowded a-verses in which a short or no dip would result if the second of the three open-class words were not stress-subordinated, and where, consequently, the metrical stress is borne by the first. In the next lines, the a-verses have the second open-class element with light semantic weight so that it is naturally absorbed into a long dip between the two other major elements in the a-verse. The first line has the *a(a)a/ax* pattern,[28] and the second *a(x)a/ax*:[29]

Þe lorde *let* for luf lotez so myry (1086)

Þis kyng *lay* at Camylot[30] vpon Krystmasse (37)

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[27] See also 670, 894, 1738, 2123, 2341. J. Turville-Petre (320) argues that noun or finite verb at the centre may be subordinated, and lists as examples lines 815, 1086, 1670, 1682, 1830, 2315. I agree with her scansion in the lines she quotes. In the verses I quote, however, I think it is the alliterating open-class word at the opening that should be suppressed.

[28] See also 491, 785 (as it stands), 1830, 2081; for the scansion of 785, see also p. 132 below.

[29] See also 123, 815, 1135, 1194, 1250, 1682, 1898, 2315.

[30] In the syntactic construction of S + V + A, a full S is usually included in the unstressed prelude, as J. Turville-Petre points out: 'In a crowded construction, a full S preceding its V can be included in the

Even when the second component carries some semantic weight, stress naturally falls on the first open-class word, with subordination of the second,[31] bringing the verse into what J. Turville-Petre calls the 'standard' rhythm of a disyllabic interval between the two a-verse stresses (except line 2301). Note especially that in the following examples, the a-verse would have an unusually long and heavy opening and a clashing stress (i.e. no dip between the second and third open-class words) if the first open-class word were to be subordinated:

And me als fayn to *falle* feye	as fayly of myyn ernde	(1067)
So, now þou hatz þi *hert* holle	hitte me bihous[32]	(2296)

From the examples here and those above, one could argue that a key factor in deciding which element should be subordinated depends on the length of the dip between the resultant two metrical stresses. What must be emphasised here is that unstressed syllables should be viewed as *binary*, i.e. either single (or none), or more, and that the strict numerical distinction, *in a long dip*, between two, three, and four syllables, only obscures any account of verse structure, and requires more complicated divisions.[33]

2.3.2 *a(a)x/ax* pattern

The same subordination rule should be applied to lines with the pre-caesural stress on non-alliterating words. The following line is *a(a)x/ax*, the initial stress falling on the first alliterating element, subordinating the second:[34]

Bot þe knyȝt *craued* leue	to kayre on þe morn	(1670)

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prehead, retaining 'inherent' stress, but uttered on a monotone...This is the basis of the opening pattern S+V+Adv or A, which was systematized in alliterative poetry' (J. Turville-Petre, 324). I argue, however, that the stress pattern fluctuates depending on where the long dip occurs.

[31] See also 98, 212, 1741, 1830, 2142, 2301.

[32] This b-verse scans *aa*.

[33] As found in, for example, J. Turville-Petre (316-7) and Duggan ('Meter', 232; see his Metrical Rule 6).

[34] See also 1362, 1581, 2070, 2121; line 1362 ('Baldely þay blw prys bayed þayr rachchez') may be scanned as alliterating on /b/, 'Baldely', 'blw', and 'bayed', subordinating 'prys', which is, especially in this context of hunting, closely linked to the last sense unit, the verb 'blw'. As may be the case with line 633 ('Gawan watz for gode knawen'), the closeness of their sound values (/p/ and /b/) may serve to absorb the open-class word 'prys' into an unstressed continuation of the second stressed word 'blw'; see also 2.6 below for discussion on rules governing the pre-caesural position.

2.3.3 *x(a)a/ax* pattern

The subordination of the second component must be true of the following a-verse as it stands; but here, it would be the *non*-alliterating open-class word at verse-opening that took the first a-verse stress, subordinating the alliterating major component that follows. The line would thus scan *x(a)a/ax*:

Þe blod *schot* for **scham** into his **schyre** face (317)

Since this would be the only instance of *x(a)a* in *Sir Gawain*, it is possible that a word is missing between 'schot' and 'scham'; if this is the case, the a-verse would have a long dip between the second and third open-class words, on which ictus would consequently fall (thus *(x)aa*).

2.4 Crowded a-verses involving only one alliterating open-class word

The crowded a-verses which we have seen so far all have at least two alliterating open-class words, whether they both carry metrical stress or not. But there are a minority of crowded a-verses in which only one alliterating open-class word occurs. Line 1372 is one of those few instances:

Thenne *comaunded* þe **l**orde in þat **s**ale to **s**amen alle þe meny (1372)

Here, the crowded a-verse has only one alliterating word ('sale')—on which the pre-caesural stress falls—and two other open-class words, 'lorde' and 'comaunded', which do not join the line-internal alliteration (i.e. /s/). One could argue that secondary alliteration between 'comaunded' and the last stave 'meny' serves to compensate for the lack of one alliterating word in the a-verse, but the /m/ alliteration may well be just accidental. Since this would be the only instance of *(x)xa* which does not involve an adjective + noun combination, emendation is again perhaps indicated—possibly, of 'lord' to *sir*, as Bertilack is referred to, in the poem, as *sire* (e.g. 'Þenne sesed hym [Gawain] þe syre and set hym bysyde', 1083) as well as, as here, the *lorde*. This emendation would restore the a-verse to the more common *(x)aa* pattern. The other few instances of crowded a-verses with only one alliterating

open-class word will be discussed in Chapter III, as they all involve an adjective + noun combination.[35]

2.5 Closed-class words at stress position

The examples which I have so far presented all (except 1372 on p. 57 above) involve at least two alliterating open-class words in the a-verse, and therefore can be explained by Duggan's metrical rules as well. One of the disagreements between Duggan and myself emerges when one comes to a line which involves a closed-class word at the pre-caesura position, as shown below:

Þis haþel heldez hym in	and þe halle entres	(221)
Lepe lyȝtly me to	and lach þis weppen	(292)

Duggan would render these lines as *aa/ax*, alliterating regularly on the two open-class words followed by three unstressed syllables, or (in the case of 292) *aax/ax*,[36] while I scan line 221 as *(a)aa/aa* and line 292 as *(a)ax/ax*, with the pre-caesural stress on the monosyllabic adverb 'in' and the preposition 'to'. In this section, therefore, I will discuss in more detail where our disagreements lie, and see if any refinements or modifications can be made to some of his rules. I will first cite those of his rules which I think are most relevant in the present discussion:[37]

Metrical Rule 1:

The poets wrote exclusively in the following combinations of alliterative patterns:

aa, *aax*, *axa*, *xaa*, or *aaa* : *ax* or *aa*

The minimum requirement of metricality is that two full staves must appear in the a-verse and the first stave in the b-verse must be full.[38]

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[35] See 3.1.4 below.

[36] As for line 292, he may perhaps take stress to fall on 'to' as well, but *aa/ax* would be the scansion that can be most naturally assumed from his rules. At least, his rules are not clear in cases like this.

[37] I cite his metrical rules as they appear in his 'Meter'.

[38] Duggan defines a 'full stave' as a 'metrically prominent syllable accompanied by alliteration ('Meter', 223); in his 'Notes' (59), he defines it as a syllable 'bearing lexical, phrasal, and metrical stress as well as alliteration'.

Metrical Rule 2:

Alliteration always falls on a stressed syllable. An ictus (a metrically stressed syllable) coincides with normal prose phrasal stress.

Metrical Rule 3:

A hierarchy of word classes determines which words may appear in ictus. Words from open classes (nouns, adjectives, most verb forms, adverbs with two or more syllables, pronouns ending in *–self*) take precedence over words from closed classes (prepositions, conjunctions, some verbs, auxiliaries, pronouns, monosyllabic adverbs). Alliteration falls on the latter only with syntactic inversion or in the absence of a word from the open class.

Metrical Rule 6:

The a-verse consists of two or three lifts and from one to four dips. There are rarely more than six or seven syllables in an a-verse dip, and the most common rhythmical patterns involve three or fewer syllables in each dip. None to five unstressed syllables may occur before the first lift and from none to seven immediately follow it. None to three syllables may fall after the final stressed syllable. Though any two dips may have three syllables, the third dip in such lines tends to be light, and when any one dip contains four or more syllables, the other two dips tend to have two, one, or no syllable.

If Rules 2 and 3 are to be applied to line 221 above, we would have some problems. Stress would fall on the two alliterating open-class words, 'haþel' and 'heldez', with monosyllabic adverbial 'in' unstressed; for, alliteration (which, according to Duggan's rules, must always be accompanied by metrical stress) falls on the closed-class word 'only with syntactic inversion or in the absence of a word from the open class'—neither of which, however, applies to the adverb 'in' here. I would scan the a-verse *(a)aa*, with stress falling on 'in' and 'heldez'. Stress on the monosyllabic adverb is required, because it is the last sense unit before the caesura (which is the boundary marker for the ear), and would be rhetorically justified, 'in' being here semantically more significant than the verb 'heldez' and marking the Green Knight's sudden appearance within the narrative scene of Arthur's court.[39] I think the above rules may be true of most alliterative poems written in unrhymed alliterative long lines. However, since his metrical theory admits three (or, possibly, even four) staves in the a-verse,[40] and

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[39] I will discuss adverbs and combinations involving adverbs in 3.2 below.

[40] For his argument for the possibility of a four-stave a-verse, see Introduction above.

appears to assume invariable conjunction between metrical stress and alliteration (except in the case of an extra a-verse stave and the last stave), the rule may present a slightly different point from that which I am going to make. If my standpoint—i.e. two-stave verse and possible disjunction of alliteration and stress—can be assumed in this poem, Duggan's rule may be rephrased as follows: closed-class words may bear metrical stress even without alliterative prominence, and even with the presence of a word from the open class; and they may not, even when they alliterate. The behaviour of closed-class words in a metrical line could perhaps be better explained in terms of stress rather than alliteration. Let us now look at some examples which involve grammatical words at the pre-caesura position:

Lepe lyȝtly me to	and lach þis weppen	(292)
Lyȝtly lepez he hym to	and laȝt at his honde	(328)

At first reading, line 292 presents no problem, having two and only two alliterating open-class words, but the occurrence of the two closed-class words after the last a-verse stress obscures the caesura, which is the boundary marker for the ear. And in line 328, the apparently last stress 'lepez' is followed by three closed-class words—and *four* unstressed syllables, which, even according to Duggan's rules (see his Rule 6 above), makes the line seem unauthentic. Interestingly, the preposition 'to' is, in each case, transposed with its complement ('me' and 'hym'), and this syntactic inversion serves to trigger stress on the preposition. Therefore, I argue that the pre-caesural stress falls on the preposition 'to', and that the second open-class word takes the first a-verse stress, as there is a long dip between this and the preposition 'to'. The pre-caesural stress on the non-alliterating 'to' must also be assumed in lines 1702a ('His felaȝes fallen hym to'), 1903a ('A rach rapes hym to'), and 2050a ('Þe wyȝe wynnez hym to'), in all of which a long dip always occurs between 'to' and the open-class word immediately preceding, on which the first a-verse stress consequently falls, stress-subordinating the open-class word at verse-opening.

As the above examples demonstrate, the syllable-count after the verse-final stress, on which some of Duggan's metrical rules are based, is not always a reliable guide to the right scansion. The inappropriateness of the syllable-count becomes more obvious when one compares such lines as the following:

I schal kysse at your comaundement	as a kmyȝt fallez	(1303)

Here and in similar lines (e.g. 877a 'Whyssynes vpon queldepoyntes', 1080a 'Now I þonk yow þryuandely', etc.), the second metrical stress is followed by three unstressed syllables[41]—the same number of syllables as in lines 1702a, 1903a, and 2050a above. The unstressed syllables in these instances are all *continuants of the same word*, and are therefore absorbed smoothly into the post-stress dip. In other words, the number of syllables is not the point regarding the pre-caesural position: more relevant are *the number of sense units* following the pre-caesural stress and *their syntactic relationship* with the preceding stave syllable. If two or more units of sense occur between the final a-verse open-class word and the caesura, the pre-caesural stress must fall on the last unit of sense, regardless of its word category. *As a rule*, therefore, only one sense unit can occur, but this unit has to be very closely linked to the stave word so that it is metrically absorbed as a post-stress dip. Otherwise, any sense unit, even if it is one word, must bear stress, as in

Queme quyssewes þen[42] þat coyntlych closed (578)

Here, 'þen' is the only sense unit between the second open-class word 'quyssewes' and the caesura. However, since it is not a constituent of the noun phrase 'queme quyssewes' but a conjunctive adverb constituting a separate syntactic unit in the a-verse, the monosyllabic adverb needs to be stressed. On the other hand, two sense units before the caesura, if *very closely* linked to the stressed word, could be integrated into a dip, and perhaps treated as exceptions to this general rule.[43] I will return to these exceptions later.

Line 1672 has only two open-class words (both alliterating), but if the same rule is to be applied, the pre-caesural stress should fall on the pronoun 'þat':

Þe *lorde* hym letted of þat to lenge hym resteyed (1672)

Similarly, 'þat' bears the pre-caesural stress at 645, but here, the pronoun is alliterating:

His *þro* þo3t watz in þat þur3 alle oþer þyngez (645)

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[41] It is also possible to regard 'queldepoyntes', 'þryuandely', and 'comaundement' as words with two or three rather than four syllables.

[42] If trisyllabic pronunciation of 'quyssewës' can be assumed, the first metrical stress falls on this word, subordinating 'queme'.

[43] There are only three lines in the poem that have two unstressed sense units following the pre-caesural stress: see 2.6 below.

In lines 578, 1672, and 645 above, the first metrical stress falls on the second alliterating component, subordinating the first, and the pre-caesural stress on the (non-)alliterating element, which is a minor component (pronoun, monosyllabic adverb). This is also the case in lines such as 726a ('For were wrathed hym no so much'), 1929a ('His surkot semed hym wel'), and so forth.[44]

As I have already pointed out, the monosyllabic adverbs in lines like 221 ('in') and 1108 ('so') would have to be unstressed if Duggan's rules are to be applied; the verses have two open-class words that can take both alliteration and stress, and involve no syntactic inversion. It is worth repeating that an open-class word occurring in the prehead has 'inherent' (i.e. linguistic) stress, which makes the word more prominent than the other adjacent unstressed syllables,[45] and that, in lines with what I have called the *(a)ax/ax* pattern, the alliteration not accompanied by metrical stress is an indication of the semantic weight of the word that is stress-subordinated.[46] More importantly, it serves to provide a line having only two alliterating stresses with compensatory alliteration, thereby satisfying the alliterative expectations of the listener.

Closed-class words occurring at the pre-caesural position can be pronouns, which can take stress under certain circumstances. A disyllabic pronoun *–self* can bear metrical stress when it occurs at the pre-caesural position:[47]

And *sayde* soberly hymself	and by his soth swerez	(2051)
Bot to *take* þe toruayle to myself	to trwluf expoun	(1540)

Note that the pre-caesural stress falls on the disyllabic pronoun whether it is alliterating or not. Duggan treats pronouns in *-self* separately from other ordinary pronouns by adding them to the category of open-class words.[48] I assign ictus to the pronouns in the above examples, *not* because I regard them (as Duggan does) as 'open-class' words, but

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[44] See also 221, 292, 328, 673, 716, 816, 952, 1002, 1589, 1592, 1702, 1797, 1903, 2006, 2050, 2331, 2466; cf. 1108a ('Swete, swap we so') and 1235a ('I schal ware my whyle wel'), in which the first a-verse stress falls, as it stands, on 'swete' and 'ware', stress-subordinating the second open-class words, 'swap' and 'whyle'.

[45] D. Crystal, *Prosodic Systems and Intonation in English*, 234.

[46] J. Turville-Petre, 320. She also states (323), 'accessory alliteration is a recognition of their weight' (here, I take 'weight' to mean 'semantic weight'). I think the point she makes here is quite perceptive and basically right, though I think that phrases like 'extra alliteration' and 'accessory alliteration' slightly misrepresent its compensatory function.

[47] e.g. 517 ('Quen Zeferus syflez hymself on sedez and erbez'), 1581 ('Til þe kny3t com hymself, kachande his blonk'), etc.

[48] Duggan, 'Meter', 226.

because the *pre-caesural position* in which they occur requires them to be stressed: they are the last sense unit before the caesura and syntactically only loosely linked to the open-class word immediately preceding ('soberly' and 'toruayle'). Thus, I would not take pronouns in *-self* to occupy a stave in such lines as *C* 582 ('Þaȝ þou bere *byself* babel byþenk þe sumtyme') and *C* 584 ('ȝif *himself* be bore blynde hit is a brod wonder'); the lines alliterate on *b*, and 'þyself' and 'himself' are simply closed-class words that do not need stress.

Pronouns can take stress for rhetorical reasons or when there is no other open-class word that can take their place:

Hit watz þe ladi loflyest to beholde (1187)

A pronoun bears both alliteration and stress in lines like 1544 ('As **I** am, oþer euer schal, in erde þer I leue') and 2463 ('Þat is **ho** þat is at home, þe auncian lady'), but a stress-bearing pronoun does not always alliterate, as shown in 1542 ('To **yow** þat, I wot wel, weldez more slyȝt'), 399 ('I wot neuer where þou wonyes, bi **hym** þat me wroȝt'), and 1293, 1525.[49] The poet seems at ease giving pronouns metrical stress—whether they alliterate or not—when they have rhetorical stress.

When pronouns occur at *line-closure*, they are always unstressed, being preceded by stressed words (a single possible exception is line 1991 below), which may be a monosyllabic verb, as in 'my souerayn I holde yow' (1278b) and 'and faythful I fynde þe' (1679b),[50] or which can even be a preposition, as in line 2150:

For alle þe golde vpon grounde I nolde go **wyth** *þe* (2150)

Stress on the preceding preposition may also be true in lines 359b ('foldez hit to me'), 1277b ('þat ȝe put on me'), and 1828b ('halden be to me'). Norman Davis also suggests stress on the preposition for these b-verses[51] (though stress on the pronoun may perhaps be justified from context in lines 359 and 1277). Therefore pronouns serve frequently to produce the unstressed line-ending syllable preferred by alliterative poets in general.

However, stress on the pronoun must be the case at 1991, if the b-verse is to have the

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[49] The pronoun 'ȝe' in line 2325 ('And ȝelde ȝederly aȝayn and þerto ȝe tryst') may serve as a so-called 'mute stave', which provides alliteration in a b-verse otherwise lacking one alliterative stave; see 2.7 below.

[50] See also 1292, 1785.

[51] See Davis, 195.

obligatory long dip:

3if he ne slepe soundyly say ne dar I (1991)

This is the *only* instance in *Sir Gawain* in which a pronoun occurring at the line-final position seems to be given metrical stress. Syntactic inversion may serve here to trigger ictus upon the pronoun 'I', but this reading creates a b-verse without a line-terminal dip. Importantly, there is some evidence to suggest that the *Gawain* poet strictly avoids ending a line with a stressed syllable.[52] Considering these points, the emendation of 'say' to *saye* with the sounded infinitive *–e* could perhaps be considered as a possibility; the b-verse would then become /xx/x, with the fourth stress falling on 'dar' followed by a line-final dip 'I'. Apart from this single instance, pronouns are consistently avoided at the line-final stressed position.

When pronouns occur as prepositional complements, they are often transposed with prepositions to create a long dip and to trigger stress on the latter, as in 'a selure hir ouer' (76b), 'and stalked hym nerre' (237b), 'hasted hem after' (1165b), and so forth.[53] As Duggan rightly argues, syntactic inversion is one of the means by which alliterative poets might have avoided the unmetrical x/x/x pattern.[54] Besides, the normal order (e.g. '. . . ouer hir' at 76b or '. . . after hem' at 1165b) would produce a long dip after the last stave, a feature which is very rarely attested in good manuscripts and which Duggan's rules do not allow.[55] In lines 2150b, 359b, 1277b, and 1838b quoted on p. 63 above, there is no such syntactic inversion to trigger stress on the preposition, since, in these b-verses, the metrically required long dip always occurs either before or after the head stave of the b-verse. There is a semantic reason as well: though both belong to closed classes, prepositions are semantically heavier than pronouns, and therefore more appropriate for the line-final stressed position. Considering these points, we may now safely say that pronouns do not occur as the last stave,[56] and that, when a pronoun + preposition occurs at line-ending, it is always the preposition that occupies the last stave, whether or not it is transposed with its pronominal complement. We may now decide the preferable reading for the next line:

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[52] See Putter and Stokes, 'Spelling', 87-94.
[53] See also 1433, 1464, 1742, 1979, 2033; in line 1221b ('to karp you wyth'), the sounding of infinitive *–e* in 'karp' has to be assumed to ensure the metrically required long dip.
[54] Duggan, 'Final *–e*', 131.
[55] Duggan, 'Meter', 231.
[56] The only possible exception is line 1991, in which syntactic inversion might justify stress on the pronoun; but the emendation to *saye* can be considered.

For mon may hyden his harme bot vnhap ne may hit (2511)

'Hit' has been taken as either a pronoun or a verb (='come about'), but I think the former is the case, because there would be no logical connection between this line and the next ('For þer hit onez it tachched twynne wil hit neuer') if 'hit' were taken as a verb, and it is highly unlikely that so skilful a poet as the *Gawain* poet would mishandle his narrative in such a way. Moreover, since a long dip occurs before the first stress of the b-verse, stress on verbal 'hit' would produce a second long dip (which is unmetrical) and no line-ending short dip. Therefore, 'hit' must be a pronoun, and it is the auxiliary 'may' that bears the line-final stress, subordinating 'hit' as a line-terminal dip. This is a further illustration that the occurrence of a pronoun as the last stave is carefully avoided by the poet, who tends to end a line with a dip.

At the pre-caesural position, a pronoun can bear stress, as in lines 1242a ('Þaȝ I be not now he'), 1537a ('Þat so worþy as ȝe'), and 1395a ('Þat watz not forward, quoþ he' [57]); otherwise, it is normally absorbed into the pre-caesural dip, as, for instance, a direct object for the preceding transitive verb ('As fortune wolde fulsun hom' 99a), or as a pronominal vocative ('Bot here yow lakked a lyttel, sir' 2366a).

Line 1569 would become regular if alliteration falls on the pronoun 'he':

Bot in þe hast þat he myȝt he to a hole wynnez (1569)

Duggan's alliterative rule (i.e. any a-verse must have two full staves) would require stress on 'he', there being no other open-class word in the a-verse. The line would then become regular in terms of alliteration. Yet I prefer to scan the a-verse as *ax*, the second stress falling on the non-alliterating 'myȝt' rather than 'he' because the former has more semantic weight by its modal sense. At line 592, too, artificial stress may be avoided by placing stress on 'watz' rather than 'he':

So harnayst as he watz he herknez his masse (592)

Unlike 'myȝt' at 1569 above, the auxiliary verb 'watz' merely denotes tense and aspect, lacking semantic weight. But since context provides for no rhetorical stress on 'he', it seems more likely that 'watz' takes stress, and that the alliteration on 'he' is

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[57] *Quod* occurs *always* unstressed, as opposed to *sayd*, which often takes (sometimes alliterative) stress, as in 476b ('and gaynly he sayde'), 753a ('And þerfore sykyng he sayde'), 544b, 1296b, 1821b, 1933b, 2126b, 2299b, 2337b, 2389b, 1222a, etc.

accidental.[58]

Duggan's remark that syntactic inversion is exploited to create a long dip in the b-verse is also probably true of the a-verse. The pronoun is frequently inverted with the preposition so that stress falls on the latter, preceded by a long dip before the open-class word, on which the first a-verse stress consequently falls. Syntactic inversion also takes place in lines 292a ('Lepe lyȝtly me to') and 328a ('Lyȝtly lepez he hym to'), which I have already quoted above. These examples fall into the *(a)ax* pattern, with the stress-subordination of the first alliterating open-class word and the promotion to stress of the non-alliterating preposition.[59] A preposition is also transposed with its pronominal complement and is given alliterative stress in a-verses with no subordination (i.e. standard a-verses):

> And syþen waked me wyth ȝe arn not wel waryst (1094)

See also 351. As was the case in the b-verse, the syntactic inversion here seems to be employed to create a long (rather than short) interval between the two stresses. The fact that inversion with preposition always occurs at this verse-ending position (and not at the verse-opening position) is a further indication of the pre-caesural stress (whether or not it is an alliterating one). Considering these points, it seems that the two half-lines have a lot in common in terms of their structure and rhythmic constraints.

When a preposition is separated from its complement, it is always unstressed, as shown by the line below:[60]

> Þe steropes þat he stod *on* stayned of þe same (170)

From the examples above, a tentative generalisation can be made about the distribution of pronouns and prepositions: pronouns can be given metrical stress at any position in the line; this will be signalled by rhetorical emphasis given by context (e.g. 'Hit watz þe ladi loflyest to beholde' (1187), in which stress on 'hit' (which refers back to 'a littel dyn at his dor' at 1183) serves to convey the degree of shock that Gawain felt at the sight of the lady, discovering she was indeed the source of the 'littel

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[58] A similar instance occurs at *SE* 139a ('As riche revestid as he was he rayked to þe toumbe'), in which the pre-caesural stress falls, as here, on 'was'.

[59] The examples here are those which involve syntactic inversion. As I have already demonstrated, however, the pre-caesural stress can fall on monosyllabic adverbs like 'wel' or 'same' or pronouns like 'þat' in lines with no syntactic inversion; see pp. 61-2 above.

[60] See also 173, 262, 310, 1727, 2097.

dyn'), or, perhaps, by a syntactic inversion (e.g. 'say ne dar I', 1991b). Stress on pronouns at line-ending is consistently avoided, and only one instance (1991b) is found in this poem (though the emendation of 'say' to *saye* can be considered). They are frequently transposed with prepositions so that they fall into a dip position, with the effect of anticipating the metrical stress on the latter. In this sense, the promotion of prepositions to ictus position is closely related to the behaviour of pronouns in a line. Prepositions can bear stress when a syntactic inversion takes place, or where there is no other open-class word in the half-line (e.g. 'þat ȝe put on me', 1277b).[61] In verses with only one open-class word and two or more closed-class words, a non-alliterating function word at the pre-caesural position may take stress, subordinating an alliterating word of the same word class (e.g. 'Bot in þe hast þat he myȝt', 1569a).

Now let us take a brief look at verb phrases consisting of auxiliary + main verb occurring at line-ending and pre-caesural position, and see what stress-pattern they show. In the b-verse, auxiliary and main verb are frequently inverted so that the latter occupies the head-stave position and the former the line-ending stave—a phenomenon which shows that alliteration falls on a semantically heavier word:[62]

Hit may be such hit is þe better and ȝe me breue wolde (1393)

The same is true of the a-verse, though, here, the auxiliary is absorbed as an unstressed continuant of the pre-caesural stress, as is shown by the following a-verses:

And fres er hit falle *myȝt*	to þe fale erþe	(728)
I nolde bot if I hit negh *myȝt*	on Nw Ȝeres morne	(1054)
Þe best þat þer breued *watz*	wyth þe blodhoundez	(1436)

It should be noted that 'myȝt' and 'watz' are the only post-stress sense units and syntactically very closely linked to the preceding main verb (infinitive and past participle). In contrast with prepositions and pronouns, syntactic inversion here does not trigger stress on an auxiliary verb: it is, just as in the b-verse, the semantically heavier main verb that normally bears alliterative stress in this construction (main verb + auxiliary verb).

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[61] The only anomalous line in this text occurs at 1188a ('Þat droȝ þe dor after hir'), which involves no syntactic inversion and has two alliterating open-class words; I would take metrical stress to fall on 'droȝ' and the first syllable of the preposition 'after' (rather than the open-class word 'dor'); see 2.6 below.
[62] See also 1457, 1493, 2262.

Before I present a general rule concerning the pre-caesural position, I will look at verses in which the caesura is preceded by two post-stress sense units.

2.6 A-verses ending with two post-stress sense units

If the authenticity of lines 2421, 1188, and 1454 is assumed, they present some difficulty, because the caesura is preceded by two post-stress sense units—pronoun + adverb or preposition + its complement. I will discuss the former case first:

To luf hom wel, and leue hem not a leude þat couþe (2421)

This a-verse has two post-stress sense units ('hem not') if one assumes the verse to be a standard one with stress falling on the two alliterating open-class words, 'luf' and 'leue'. 'Hem not' is syntactically very closely linked to the preceding verb 'leue', with which it is forming a verb phrase. Besides, the parallel construction (i.e. verb + pronominal object + adverb) in 'luf hom wel' and 'leue hem not' may help to absorb the two sense units into a post-stress dip before the caesura. One may argue, however, that since the monosyllabic adverbs 'wel' and 'not' carry phrasal stress and (in the case of 'not') even rhetorical stress in context, these adverbs, too, are candidates for ictus. If one takes ictus to fall on the two alliterating open-class words, these adverbs will have to be understood as stress-subordinated elements;[63] if the pre-caesural stress is taken to fall on 'not', the first a-verse stress will be carried by 'wel', subordinating 'leue' and 'luf' (as there is no long dip between 'not' and 'leue' that indicates ictus on this open-class word). But the latter reading would give a verse scanning *(a)x(a)x* in which neither of the two alliterating open-class words bears ictus; this verse would then be the only instance in the text of a crowded a-verse in which two alliterating open-class words are subordinated to other two non-alliterating closed-class words. I would want to propose an alternative reading, however. I would treat 'luf hom wel' and 'leue hem not' as verb + (simple) adverb combinations, which, as I shall discuss in Chapter III, can, like adjective + noun combinations, be treated as constituting a single metrical unit, occupying only one stave, and with ictus falling on either element. This a-verse may therefore be best understood as a crowded verse with two verb + adverb combinations.

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[63] As I have been proposing, their linguistic stress, here, do not coincide with metrical ictus, which falls on 'luf' and 'leue'.

Yet this interpretation, too, would allow two different scansions: stress falling either on the two alliterating open-class words with a long dip between—thus giving a verse scanning *a(x)...a(x)*—or on the two non-alliterating adverbs, with alliteration being provided by 'leue' and 'luf' (thus *(a)x...(a)x*). I must admit that this line is difficult to scan, but either of the two readings (i.e. *a(x)...a(x)* or *(a)x...(a)x*) would conform to my a-verse rules. The following lines present a second case:

Þat droȝ þe dor after hir ful dernly and stylle (1188)
Schalkez to schote at hym schowen to þenne (1454)

The a-verses above both involve two alliterating open-class words followed by two sense units—a preposition and a pronoun. If my caesura rule (i.e. if there are two or more sense units between the last open-class word and the caesura, the second a-verse stress must fall on the last sense unit of the half-line) is applied, and if the authenticity of these lines is assumed, stress must fall on the personal pronouns 'hir' and 'hym', subordinating 'droȝ' and 'schote'. But stress on the pronouns would be unnatural, since context does not indicate any rhetorical emphasis. However, stress on the two open-class word, 'droȝ' and 'dor'—a scansion which can be assumed from Duggan's metrical rules—would also produce a line without a long dip either before or after the first a-verse stress, which is unmetrical according to my rules.[64] Besides, the suppression of the whole prepositional phrase which is not very closely linked to the preceding stave-word ('dor') would obscure the caesura. Therefore, I want to suggest one possible reading: the pre-caesural stress on 'after', with consequent stress-subordination of 'dor', which was already referred to in line 1183 ('A littel dyn at his dor, and dernly vpon'). We have seen that an alliterating open-class word may be subordinated to a non-alliterating closed-class word, and that in the construction of preposition + pronoun, stress always falls on the former. The pre-caesural stress on 'after' dictates the first a-verse stress to fall on 'droȝ' (thus *a(a)x*), as there is no dip between the preposition and 'dor', the word immediately preceding. This reading would sound, perhaps, more natural to the ear than the other readings, which require either stress on 'hir', or suppression of the whole prepositional phrase, which would obscure the caesura and render the verse unmetrical (by my rule). In line 1454, stress on 'hym' is not justified by context. However, 'shote at hym' is an infinitive clause awaiting the main verb 'schowen' in the b-verse, and the prepositional phrase 'at hym' is a verb complement within that infinitive clause. The prepositional phrase is

therefore very closely linked to the preceding verb 'schote', as opposed to 'after hir' (at 1188). Besides, the line already has a long dip between two alliterating open-class words, 'schalkez' and 'schote'. Therefore, it is likely that the prepositional phrase should be swallowed up as unstressed continuants of 'shote'. Thus, all the three lines above are probably authentic, and are assimilable to my rules.[65]

At 1538, two sense units occur after the stressed word:

And pyne yow with so pouer a mon as play wyth your kny3t (1538)

One would want to stress 'pyne' and 'pouer'. Stress on 'pouer' rather than 'mon' can be justified if one treats the phrase 'pouer a mon' simply as a variant of adjective + noun combination, which I will discuss in the next chapter; the unusual occurrence of two sense units is caused by the emphatic construction involving the intensive 'so'.

Lastly, there is one example in which the unstressed sense unit is a verb participle:

Gawan watz for gode knawen and as golde pured (633)

It is extremely rare that a verb (though in a non-finite participle form) occurs unstressed in this position. However, it is likely that line 633 consistently alliterates on /g/, that is, 'Gawan', 'gode', and 'golde'—which are all significant key words in the poem—and that 'knawen' is stress-subordinated and absorbed into a post-stress dip. The subordination of a participle at this position does not fit any of my metrical rules. But the occurrence of 'knawen' is anticipated by the preposition 'for' to which the verb

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[64] I will formulate general metrical rules governing the *standard* a-verse in 3.3 below.

[65] *St Erkenwald* has two instances of two post-stress sense units:

To vouchesafe to revele *hym hit* by a visoun or elles (*SE* 121)
Sithen we wot not qwo *þou art* witere us þiselwen (*SE* 185)

Both cases are only apparent exceptions and therefore assimilable to my caesura rule; at 121, two personal pronouns, 'hym' and 'hit', are part of the verb phrase ('revele hym hit'), being thus closely linked to the preceding verb 'revele'; similarly, at 185, 'þou art' forms, together with the preceding stressed word 'qwo', a noun clause ('qwo þou art'), which itself functions as a direct object of the main verb 'wot' in the subordinated clause introduced by 'sithen'. *Cleanness* 739a may also be regarded as a verse with two post-stress sense units:

And fyue wont of fifty, *quoþ God*, I schal for3ete alle (*C* 739)

This is a difficult line to scan, as the a-verse has four possible ictus positions; the spacing rule dictates stress on 'fifty' and 'God', thus producing the verse with *(a)(x)ax*; alternatively, one could perhaps stress 'fyue' and 'fifty'—two semantically most important words in the first half-line—and treat 'quoþ God' as a post-stress dip before the caesura; 'quoþe God' would not obscure the caesura as the caesura seems always to occur after 'quoþ + noun' when it is inserted, as here, amid a given speech: e.g. C 729 ('Nay, for fifty, quoþ þe fader, and þy fayre speche'), C 733 ('Aa, blessed be þow, quoþ þe burne, so boner

phrase 'watz + knawen' is syntactically closely linked. Moreover, the link between 'gode' and 'knawen' is also suggested and reinforced by the closeness of their sound qualities (i.e. /g/ and /k/). Therefore, 'knawen' can be treated as an unstressed continuant of the stressed word 'gode'.

Before I conclude this chapter, I will examine b-verses in which disjunction between alliteration and stress can be observed.

2.7 Mute stave in the b-verse

Duggan admits that Langland uses a so-called 'mute stave' (a stave which alliterates but does not bear metrical stress)[66] quite systematically in his poem, but he adds that the mute stave is observable only when the alliteration is fully established in the a-verse.[67] He appears to deny the occurrence of a mute stave in other alliterative poems written in the unrhymed alliterative long lines.[68] I have been suggesting, however, that in *Sir Gawain*, stress and alliteration may not always coincide, constituting a different system. And the metrical rules that are emerging also show the possible disjunction between alliteration and stress in the a-verse. The same may therefore be true of the b-verse. Significantly, too, the *xx* pattern seems always to occur in b-verses in which the line-internal alliteration appears to be carried vicariously by a minor element occurring just before or after the non-alliterating stressed word. There are eight lines which have been emended (in Tolkien and Gordon) from *aa/xx* to *aa/ax*,[69] but none of these b-verses has a minor element which could vicariously have carried alliteration. Other than these emended lines, there is only one example in the whole poem which has the *aa/xx* pattern, but no apparent mute stave.[70] Considering these points, it is likely that *Gawain* poet, too, uses a mute stave as a metrical recourse in the following lines:

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and þewed'); see also *C* 757, *C* 761, *C* 765.

[66] The term 'mute stave' was first used by A. V. C. Schmidt, who also named a stave with stress but no alliteration a 'blank stave'; see *The Clerkly Maker*, 36.

[67] Duggan, 'Notes', 59: 'In each of the 87 lines in the corpus with a mute stave in a b-verse, full staves in the a-verse so firmly establish the alliterative pattern that a mute stave in the b-verse can serve as a kind of metrical synecdoche'.

[68] Cf. Duggan, 'Meter', 223:'Though the manuscripts of other poems from time to time offer apparent instances of mute staves, theses are in every case inauthentic, the product of scribal error'. However, T. Turville-Petre recognises the existence of a 'mute stave'—though he does not use this term—in *Sir Gawain* and cites line 987 ('Er me wont þe wede, with help of my frendez') as an example; see *The Alliterative Revival*, 137, n. 24.

[69] See 236, 343, 958, 971, 1030, 1208, 1440, 1906.

[70] See 1941.

Bid me boȝe fro þis benche	and stonde *b*y yow þere	(344)
Er me wont þe wede	*w*ith help of my frendez	(987)
Bi Mary, quoþ þe menskful,	*me þ*ynk hit an oþer	(1268)
Bot þe burde hym blessed	and, *B*i þis skyl, sayde	(1296)
Haue I þryuandely þonk	*þ*urȝ my craft serued	(1380)
Þe hunt rehayted þe houndez	þat *h*it fyrst mynged	(1422)
I ȝef yow me for on of yourez	if *y*owreself lykez	(1964)
Þe mon hem maynteines	ioy *m*ot þay haue	(2053)[71]
And ȝelde ȝederly aȝayn	and þerto ȝe tryst	(2325)
Þurȝ myȝt of Morgne la Faye	þat in *m*y hous lenges	(2446)

The non-alliterating words above are all open-class words which are normally stressed. Note also that the b-verse rhythmic rules (the requirement of a long dip before or after the head stave) require lines 1422b, 1964b, 2053b to have stress on 'fyrst', '–self', and 'joy'.

The following examples may also be regarded as instances of a 'mute' stave:

As mony burde þeraboute	had *b*en seuen wynter	(613)
He braydez hit by þe bauderyk	a*b*oute þe hals kestes	(621)
For to haf wonnen hym to woȝe	*wh*at-so scho þoȝt ellez	(1550)
Were boun busked on hor blonkkez	*b*ifore þe halle ȝatez	(1693)
And þenne þay helden to home	for *h*it watz nieȝ nyȝt	(1922)
Whyrlande out of a wro	*w*yth a felle weppen	(2222)

With the examples above, however, it might not be necessary to invoke a 'mute' stave, since the function words in question could in fact constitute full staves, with stress-subordination of the first of the open-class (except 'seuen' at 613) words that follow, which are either the first element of an adjective + noun (or noun + noun) combination, or semantically light ('þoȝt' 1550 and 'nieȝ' 1922) or predictable ('hals' 621). Besides, these b-verses will remain metrical—i.e. they have one and only one long dip before or after the first of the two b-verse stresses—whether the first stress falls on the alliterating function words or the following non-alliterating words with more semantic weight. Accordingly, the following scansion is also a possibility:

As mony burde þeraboute	had ben seuen wynter	(613)
He braydez hit by þe bauderyk	aboute þe hals kestes	(621)
For to haf wonnen hym to woȝe	what-so scho þoȝt ellez	(1550)
Were boun busked on hor blonkkez	bifore þe halle ȝatez	(1693)
And þenne þay helden to home	for hit watz nieȝ nyȝt	(1922)
Whyrlande out of a wro	wyth a felle weppen	(2222)

With the scansion shown above, these b-verses could be treated as having the *ax* pattern.

2.8 Conclusion

Here are the general metrical rules which seem to me to emerge from an examination of lines in *Sir Gawain*:

Caesura Rule:

(1) *As a rule*, only one sense unit (a single word or one element of a nominal/ verbal group) can occur between the last stressed word and the caesura, but this has to be linked *syntactically very closely* to the word bearing the pre-caesural stress—i.e. being an essential part of a phrase in which the preceding stressed word is a main component. The post-stress sense unit may or may not involve a long dip.

(2) If an a-verse has two or more sense units after the last open-class word, the pre-caesural stress must fall on the last sense unit, regardless of its syllabic length and word category. Only very rarely can two sense units occur (e.g. 'Schalkez to schote at hym' 1454a), but I have argued that they can still be treated as unstressed continuants of the pre-caesural stress, and therefore accepted as only apparent exceptions to the general rule.

Subordination Rule (or 'Spacing Rule') for Crowded A-verses:

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[71] For the scansion of this a-verse, see p. 114 below.

(1) An a-verse becomes 'crowded' if and when it has three (or more) possible ictus positions. These three positions are occupied by three or more open-class words, or by two open-class words and one closed-class word requiring stress at the pre-caesural position. Pre-caesural stress on the closed-class word is often signalled by syntactic inversion (e.g. 'Lepe lyȝtly me to' 292a).

(2) If there is a long dip between the word bearing the pre-caesural stress and the open-class word that immediately precedes, the first open-class word at verse-opening has to be stress-subordinated and absorbed into the pre-stress prelude; if there is only a short or no dip, the first open-class word takes stress, stress-subordinating the second.

(3) The long dip between the two a-verse stresses or what J. Turville-Petre calls the 'standard' rhythm seems, in the crowded a-verse, to serve as a *rhythmic marker* to signal on which words metrical stress falls.

(4) I call this stress-subordination rule 'the spacing rule', which governs all crowded a-verses.

There is one line that does not seem to conform to this spacing rule:

Þe lede lay lurked a ful longe quyle (1195)

The spacing rule would require stress on 'lede' and 'lurked', but, unless the final *–e* of 'lede' (<OE *lēod*, m.) is sounded, this would result in a crowded verse with no long dip, which I argue is unmetrical. However, considering evidence available from study of this word in the b-verse (e.g. 2421b 'a leude þat couþe', in which the sounding of final *–e* in 'leude' is required to create the metrically required long dip), the line in question should perhaps be regarded as only an apparent exception to the rule stipulated above.

Whatever syntactic structure the crowded a-verse has, its metrical structure roughly mirrors that of the b-verse. A long dip either before or after the first stress is the requirement for metricality in the b-verse. Similarly, the crowded a-verse also requires a long dip (though it must occur *between* the two stresses), and the opening long dip is optional. The great structural difference between the two half-lines is that, while the b-verse must have one and only one long dip,[72] the crowded a-verse can have *two* or *three* long dips. In addition, at line-termination, only a short dip can occur in the

b-verse, whereas a *long* dip can occur at the pre-caesura position if it is closely related to the preceding stressed syllable as a lexical (e.g. 'I schal kysse at your comaundement', 1303a) or grammatical (e.g. 'Þe best þat þer breued watz', 1436a) continuant. The possible occurrence of a long dip after the pre-caesural stress and the requirement of at least one long dip (excluding one occurring after the pre-caesural stress), which are distributional characteristics of the crowded a-verse, are, in fact, shared by the non-crowded (i.e. standard) a-verse, which I will discuss in the next Chapter.

[72] See Duggan, 'Meter', 231.

CHAPTER III

ADJECTIVE + NOUN COMBINATIONS

In Chapter II, the stress-subordination rule (or 'spacing rule') in connection with crowded a-verses has been stated. In the first part of this chapter, I will examine more closely the distribution of adjective + noun combinations in crowded a-verses. As I have been proposing, these combinations are treated *metrically*, in the alliterative long line, as if they were 'compounds', occupying only one stave, with metrical stress falling on either combination element. In this chapter, I will attempt to formulate the rhythmic constraints that seem to me to be operative in the crowded a-verse involving such metrical 'compounds', and consider whether or not any exception to the above-stated spacing rule for the crowded a-verse in general (i.e. the crowded a-verse must have a long dip between the two stresses) has to be made. In the course of the discussion, I will propose that a certain kind of verb + adverb combinations—those of verb + simple adverb—can also be treated as a single metrical unit. In the latter part of the chapter, I shall turn to the standard a-verse (i.e. a-verse with only two possible ictus positions) and study the distribution in the a-verse of adjective + noun combinations which occupy the whole verse, each bearing metrical stress. I will compare the distributional pattern of the adjective + noun combination occurring in crowded a-verses with that in standard a-verses. By studying the way the poet treats the same syntactic combination in crowded and non-crowded a-verses, one may find the underlying metrical principle which governs the rhythmic structure of the a-verse. The study will strongly suggest that the rhythmic shape of the standard a-verse, as is the case with the crowded a-verse, roughly mirrors that of the b-verse: like the b-verse, the standard a-verse must also have one long dip before or after the first stress (though it may, unlike the b-verse, have two or three long dips).

3.1 Adjective + noun combinations

3.1.1 A + N combinations at verse-opening

There are crowded a-verses with two open-class words preceding the word bearing

the pre-caesural stress, the first two forming an A + N combination. Where both adjective and noun alliterate, the above-stated spacing rule applies: the initial metrical stress falls on the second (i.e. the noun) element of the combination when a long dip before the second (or pre-caesural) stress ensues. Here is a typical example of a pattern annotatable as *(a)a...a*:[1]

There gode Gawan watz grayþed Gwenore bisyde (109)

A noun phrase is also realized by such combinations as noun + noun (e.g. 'With luf-laȝyng a lyt' 1777a), and genitive + noun (e.g. 'Þe duches doȝter of Tyntagelle' 2465a), which can therefore be treated as variants of the A + N combination.

At 73 and 2338 below, stress falls on 'burne', though its synonym *mon* is often absorbed into a dip:

Þe best burne ay abof as hit best semed (73)
Bolde burne, on þis bent be not so gryndel (2338)

Burne without adjective often occupies one stave, accompanied by alliteration, as in lines like 'and þy burȝ and þy burnes' (258a) and 'and þe borelych burne' (2148a). In his *Stab und Wort in Gawain*,[2] August Brink (whose study of vocabulary in Middle English alliterative poems is summarised and discussed by Borroff[3]) regards *burne*, together with other synonymous terms for 'man' such as *freke*, *gome*, *haþel*, *lede*, etc., as a word of 'high alliterative rank', that is, a word which has 'archaic and elevated stylistic quality', and which occurs exclusively in alliterating and stressed position. One might argue that context justifies metrical emphasis on 'best' and 'bolde' in the lines in question: 'best' is a contrastive adjective, and 'bolde' in 2338 can have multiple meanings, depending on how one interprets Bertilak's speech (complimentary, ironical, etc.) in the Revelation Scene. However, there would be no call for the highly alliterative word except for metrical reasons; for the poet could have inserted *mon* or *knyȝt*, a word of 'low alliterative rank', that is, a word which occurs in the normally

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[1] See also 40, 47, 155, 353, 355, 470, 545, 591, 644, 651, 742, 793, 796, 803, 822, 832, 856, 862, 889, 902, 903, 985, 1047, 1133, 1284, 1423, 1566, 1602, 1636, 1750, 1916, 2000, 2054, 2172, 2197, 2479, 2491. I follow J. Turville-Petre and use the notational mark '...' to indicate the interval between the two stresses; but I use this notational mark only for crowded a-verses involving adjective + noun combinations or their variants.

[2] August Brink, *Stab und Wort in Gawain: eine stylistische Untersuchung*, Studien zur englischen Philologie 59 (Halle, 1920).

[3] Borroff, 52-3.

non-alliterating line-final position as well as alliterating and stressed position.[4] Since alliteration thus makes the word metrically prominent, I take the first stress to fall on 'burne', and 'best' and 'bolde' to be stress-subordinated and absorbed into the opening unstressed prehead. The a-verses have the resulting long dip between 'burne', and 'abof' and 'bent', which bear the pre-caesural stress. This reading is, in fact, supported by other evidence as well: the occurrence of 'ay' before the pre-caesural stress (at 73) and of the prepositional phrase at the pre-caesural position (at 2338).[5] The monosyllabic adverb 'ay' often serves, together with *ful*, as a metrical filler to produce the metrically required long dip in the crowded a-verse (as well as in the b-verse); stress on 'burne' is confirmed by the presence of the monosyllabic adverb, which is necessitated by the stress-bearing noun being monosyllabic. My study will also show that prepositional phrases occurring at the pre-caesural position of crowded a-verses have one specific metrical function—to produce a central long dip between the pre-caesural stress (which always falls on the prepositional complement) and the open-class word immediately before the preposition.[6] At 2338, therefore, stress on the monosyllabic 'burne' is supported by the occurrence of the prepositional phrase 'on this bent', in which the preposition and the demonstrative serve to produce the long central dip. It may be worth repeating again that the stress-subordinated adjectives are given no *metrical* stress (or ictus) but still retain their *linguistic* stress, and that their semantic weight is marked by alliteration.

The following crowded a-verses also involve verse-opening combinations with double alliteration, but here, the non-combination component at the pre-caesural position does not alliterate:

Riche red on þat on	rayled ayquere	(952)
Þe breme bukkez also	with hor brode paumez	(1155)

The first a-verse stress falls on the noun, followed by a long central dip before the pre-caesural stress, which is, here, borne by the non-alliterating pronoun or adverb. Again, the alliterating adjective is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the unstressed prehead. These verse are thus annotated as *(a)a...x*.

In the above examples, there is always a long dip between the second combination element and the non-combination component (on which the pre-caesural stress falls).

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[4] *Ibid.*, 52.

[5] In Chapter IV, I will discuss the metrical significance of intensifiers and (stock) prepositional phrases in the long line to demonstrate the validity of my a-verse rhythmic rule; see 4.1 and 4.4 below.

In the following lines, both elements of the combination alliterate, but the *second* element (i.e. noun) is subordinated to produce a long dip between the two stresses:

Is þe lel layk of luf	þe lettrure of armes	(1513)
Bot þis foule fox felle	þe fende haf þe godez[7]	(1944)

As these examples and those above show, the crowded a-verse with a verse-opening A + N combination seems, when both elements of the combination alliterate, to be following the spacing rule: if there is a long dip between the second element of the combination (i.e. noun) and the pre-caesural stress, which is borne by the non-combination element, the first stress falls on the noun combination element; if not, it falls on the adjective, stress-subordinating the noun. And in the a-verses with the *(a)a...a*, *(a)a...x*, or *a(a)...a* pattern, there is no question of disjunction between alliteration and stress *in the combination*: they always coincide.

Alliteration often accompanies stress when only one of the combination elements alliterates. This is particularly so if the non-alliterating element has semantically little or less significance than the alliterating counterpart. Such elements are normally intensifying adjectives (*gret*, etc.), adjectival indefinite pronouns (*ilk*, *mony*, *much*, *oþer*, *same*, *vch*, etc.), ordinal numerals (*fyrst*, etc.), and generic nouns such as *mon*, *kyng*, *kny3t*. I take *much* and *kny3t* as examples:[8]

With much reuel and ryche	of the Rounde Table	(538)
Whyle þe hende kny3t at home	holsumly slepes	(1731)

With the application of the spacing rule, the first stress falls on the noun ('reuel') at 538, but at 1731, it is the adjective ('hende') that takes stress, as there is only a short dip between the second combination element ('kny3t') and 'home', which bears the pre-caesural stress. These verses are thus annotatable as *(x)a...a* or *a(x)...a*, in which the stressed element—either noun or adjective—is, again, accompanied by alliteration.

However, a non-alliterating element is not always semantically ignorable, and does, in some cases, have semantic force. When it is the adjective element that has such semantic force, the spacing rule seems always to require the adjective to be stress-subordinated and absorbed into the unstressed prelude, as it does with 'kay',

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[6] See 4.1 below.

[7] The final *–e* of the weak adjective 'foule' has to be pronounced to produce a long dip between the stresses.

'grene', and 'hyȝe' in the lines below:

Þe kay fot on þe folde	he before sette	(422)
To þe grene chapel þou chose,	I charge þe, to fotte	(451)
Bot hyȝe bonkkez and brent	vpon boþe halue	(2165)

In each case, the spacing rule dictates stress on the second combination element (i.e. noun), as there is a long dip between this element and the non-combination open-class word, which bears the pre-caesural stress. These a-verses are thus annotated as *(x)a...a*, in which alliteration and stress, again, coincide. Difficulty may arise, however, when it is the *noun* element that is non-alliterating and semantically heavily loaded as well. For instance:[9]

Þen grene aumayl on golde	glowande bryȝter	(236)
Þat þe schene blod ouer his schulderes	schot to þe erþe	(2314)

In all the other examples we have seen so far, there was no conflict, in the combination, between alliteration and stress (which is dictated by the spacing rule): in verses with *(a)a...a*, *(a)a...x*, *a(a)...a*, and *(x)a...a*, the stressed element, whether adjective or noun, was always accompanied by alliteration. But here, the spacing rule dictates stress on the noun (as it is followed by a long dip before the pre-caesural stress, which falls on 'golde' and 'schulderes'), but alliteration highlights the adjective ('grene', 'schene'), and not the noun. Stress on the alliterating adjective and resulting stress-subordination on the noun will still produce a long central dip, and could, for this reason, be regarded as assimilable to the spacing rule. Thus, one is left with two options: one can either apply the spacing rule, consistently, to any combination (whether it has double or single alliteration), or adopt, *only* in the combination where both elements do not alliterate, the rule of alliteration dictating stress. I will discuss these cases later,[10] as the issue also involves adjective + noun combinations occurring at the pre-caesural position, which are the next subject of my discussion.

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[8] See also 9 (*gret*), 224 (*fyrst*), 830 (*mon*), 811 (*sir*).
[9] See also 152, 334, 381, 538, 776, 1070, 1208, 1740, 2373.
[10] See 3.1.3 below.

3.1.2 A + N combinations in the pre-caesura position

In cases where it is the second and third open-class words which form a combination, a long dip *consistently* occurs between the first open-class word (or, very rarely, a closed class word with phrasal/sentence stress) and either one of the two combination elements, which consequently bears the pre-caesural stress, accompanied, normally, by alliteration. In other words, the long dip shifts from the above-seen position between the second and third open-class components of the verse to one between the non-combination element and either element of the pre-caesural combination. This is a clear indication that the A + N is treated as a single unit as if it were metrically a 'compound' word. Typical examples are:[11]

And fer ouer þe French flod	Felix Brutus	(13)
Braydez out a bryȝt sworde	and bremely he spekez	(2319)

A long central dip occurs between the non-combination component and the adjective, and the noun is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the post-stress dip. These crowded a-verses are thus annotated as *a... a(a)* and *a... a(x)*.

I have pointed out (on p. 79 above) that in the adjective + noun combination, adjectival pronouns such as *many*, *much*, *such* do not normally take stress. However, they may do so when they occur *predicatively*, preceding a function verb (e.g. 'watz', 'is'), and followed by a pre-caesural combination with *double alliteration*, thus producing a pattern annotatable as *a...a(a)*. For example:

Mony watz þe myry mouthe	of men and of houndez	(1447)
Gret is þe gode gle	and gomen to me huge	(1536)

Note that a long central dip is present in both a-verses. Here, stress on the minor adjective, 'Mony' and 'Gret', may not seem so controversial, for both are alliterating. But I also stress 'miche'('much') in the following lines—even though they are *unalliterated*:[12]

And miche watz þe gyld gere	þat glent þeralofte	(569)

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[11] Other examples of the first type are: 75, 211, 214, 507, 817, 1403, 1901, 2297; of the second type: 136, 187, 193, 220, 269, 458, 1003, 1135, 1464, 1628, 1832, 1955, 1961, 1998, 2162, 2260.

[12] 'Al' at 54 ('For al watz þis fayre folk in her first age) should also be included here.

Wel much watz þe warme water þat waltered of yȝen (684)

These a-verses can be read as *x...a(a)* in which the alliterating noun is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the pre-caesural dip.[13] One may, as J. Turville-Petre does,[14] scan these a-verses as standard ones with stress falling on the two alliterating open-class words (thus *aa*):

And miche watz þe gyld gere þat glent þeralofte (569)
Wel much watz þe warme water þat waltered of yȝen (684)

However, syntactic transposition between the minor adjective and the following verb ('watz') triggers, as it does at 1447 and 1536 on p. 81 above, phrasal stress on the former, which, as a result, becomes a candidate for metrical stress. In addition, these crowded a-verses have a syntactic structure very similar to that of 1447 and 1536, in which the first stress falls on the predicative adjective ('Mony' and 'Gret'). Equally importantly, there is a long dip between the minor adjective and the first alliterating open-class word (i.e. 'gyld' and 'warme'). It is thus illogical and also inconsistent to scan these verses in different ways. Considering these points, I take these a-verses as crowded ones in which metrical ictus falls on the minor adjective at verse-opening and the first element of the combination with a long dip between. These verses can therefore be annotated as *x...a(a)*.

The same pattern occurs at 843—though, here, a pre-caesural combination with double alliteration is preceded by a non-alliterating verb with light semantic weight:[15]

And þuȝt hit a bolde burne þat þe burȝ aȝte (843)

A non-alliterating component at verse-opening may be pronominal *þat*:

Bot þat watz for no wylyde werke ne wowyng nauþer (2367)

It may worth pointing out that verses with this *x...(a)a* pattern mirror those with *(a)a...x*, in which the verse-opening combination with double alliteration is followed by a

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[13] Cf.: 'And many was þe balde berne at banned þe quile' (*WA* 157).
[14] J. Turville-Petre, 318: 'The rare pattern (x)xxx// is in a-verse always produced by adjective + noun: 'and miche watz þe gyld gere' (569)'; she also lists lines 558, 662, 843 as examples; her description of the rhythm as 'the rare pattern' may imply that she is not completely satisfied with her own reading.
[15] J. Turville-Petre (318) scans this a-verse as xxxx// as well.

non-alliterating pre-caesural stress, which is sometimes borne by a closed-class word. In each case, the combination serves to provide a crowded a-verse with two alliterating words.

The pre-caesural combination is commonly a combination of monosyllabic adjective + monosyllabic noun (or noun with a monosyllabic stem). But there are three instances in which a pre-caesural combination has double alliteration and a disyllabic adjective, and in which two short dips (verse-opening and central) would result if the alliterating adjective takes the second metrical stress. With the application of the spacing rule, I scan these a-verses as follows:

Bend his bresed broȝez[16]	blycande grene	(305)
To bide a blysful blusch	of þe bryȝt sunne	(520)
To dryȝe a delful dynt	and dele no more	(560)

J. Turville-Petre argues, however, that, at lines 520a and 560a, stress falls on each combination element, subordinating the first open-class word, to give the following scansion:[17]

To bide a blysful blusch	of þe bryȝt sunne	(520)
To dryȝe a delful dynt	and dele no more	(560)

Her scansion produces a crowded a-verse with a short dip between the two stresses, which I regard as metrically not permissible in any crowded a-verse. Here, it may be worth mentioning one of Duggan's b-verse rules: the rhythmic pattern *x/x/(x)* can occur in the b-verse only when its first stave is occupied by the first syllable of a disyllabic adjective immediately followed by a noun (with stress on its first syllable).[18] One could perhaps extend this b-verse rule to the crowded a-verse involving combinations of disyllabic adjective and noun, and argue that these a-verses in question should be treated as exceptions to the spacing rule. However, there are also combinations of disyllabic adjective + noun which are better treated as occupying one stave only:[19]

And quykly of þe quelled dere	a querré þay maked	(1324)

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[16] N. Davis (168) assigned the meaning 'bristling' to *bresed*, but its etymology is not known.
[17] She does not specifically address cases of a combination of disyllabic adjective + monosyllabic or disyllabic noun; see J. Turville-Petre, 322-3.
[18] Duggan, 'Final *–e*', 144.
[19] See also 1447, 1495, 2493.

Laȝt to his lufly hed	and lyft hit vp sone	(433)
Hadet wyth an aluisch mon	for angardez pryde	(681)
Madame, quoþ þe myry mon,	Mary ȝow ȝelde	(1263)

Only the last example has double alliteration; but 'quelled' ('killed') at 1324 shows that even participle verbs used as adjectives (as opposed to *–ed/-en* adjectives which were originally formed from verbs but have been fully integrated and become adjectives—e.g. *tryed* ('fine') in 'of tryed tolouse, or tars' 77a, *þryuen* ('fair') in 'hir þryuen face and hir þrote' 1740a) can be combined with a noun, and, together, form a metrical 'compound'. *Sir Gawain* has only one instance of disyllabic adjective + disyllabic noun at the pre-caesural position ('bresed broȝez' 305a), but a comparable example is found in *Cleanness*:

Mourkenes þe mery weder	and þe myst dryues	(1760)

Considering these counter-examples, it seems more likely that stress falls, at 305, 520, 560 above, on the first open-class word ('bende', 'bide', 'dryȝe) and the noun element of the pre-caesural combination, and that the spacing rule applies. The verses of this type are thus annotated as *a...(a)a*.

The following crowded a-verses involve combinations with single alliteration on the noun. The spacing rule dictates stress on this element, subordinating the adjective, to create the long central dip after the non-combination open-class word at verse-opening:

For hit is ȝol and Nwe ȝer	and here ar ȝep mony	(284)
Þay let doun[20] þe grete draȝt	and derely out ȝeden	(817)
Nay for soþë, beau sir,[21]	sayd þat swete	(1222)
And ryȝt bifore þe hors fete	þay fel on hym alle	(1904)

These crowded a-verses can be scanned as *a...(x)a*, in which alliteration and stress coincide.

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[20] I will discuss combinations of verb + adverb in 3.2.2 below.

[21] Here, the sounding of final *–e* in 'soþe' is assumed so that the verse has a long central dip.

3.1.3 Possible disjunction between alliteration and stress in adjective + noun combinations

I have so far discussed the adjective + noun combinations with double/single alliteration in which alliteration and stress coincide; that is, the stressed element (whether adjective or noun) is also accompanied by alliteration. Crowded a-verses involving such combinations are those with patterns such as *(a)a...a/(a)a...x*, *a(a)...a*, *(x)a...a*, and *a(x)...a*—if they are verse-opening combinations—or, *a...a(a)/x...a(a)*, *a...a(x)*, *a...(a)a*, and *a...(x)a*—if pre-caesural ones. There are cases in which alliteration does not accompany a combination element which the spacing rule requires to be stressed. In some of these cases, one has to decide which of the two metrical principles—the spacing rule or alliteration—dictates stress, because either reading would produce a crowded a-verse with a long central dip, which, I have been arguing, is a condition for metricality of any crowded a-verse. In this section, I will treat possible instances of an A + N combination in which disjunction between alliteration and stress takes place, and present a preferable reading for the crowded a-verses involving such combinations. I first look at instances in which stress on the alliterating combination element would result in producing a verse unmetrical by the spacing rule.

When the placement of stress on the alliterating component would produce a crowded a-verse with only a short dip between the two stresses, stress shifts to the *non*-alliterating noun—which does, however, in the following lines, alliterate with the last stave. These lines are thus formulated as *a... (a)b/ab*:

And Ywan, Vryn *s*on	ette with hymseluen	(113)
And gef hym Goddez *b*lessing	and gladly hym *b*iddes	(370)

The resulting disjunction between alliteration and stress suggests that the poet treats them as different systems, however closely they are often connected to each other.

Disjunction between alliteration and stress is also indicated by the spacing rule at 404 and 1290:[22]

Þat is innogh in Nwe 3er	hit nedes no more	(404)
Þenne ho gef hym god day	and wyth a glent la3ed	(1290)

[22] J. Turville-Petre (322) also takes stress to fall on '3er' at 404.

The second example can serve as a guide to the right scansion for the following lines, in which the a-verse has two open-class words followed by the pre-caesural combination, 'god (*or* goud) day':

Gawan gef hym god day	þe godmon hym lachchez	(1029)
Gef hym God and goud day	þat Gawayn he saue	(2073)

In each case, the first open class word ('Gawan' and 'Gef') is absorbed into the opening dip, with ictus falling on the second open-class word ('gef' and 'God') and the noun combination element ('day').

These instances further suggest the possibility that the *Gawain* poet allowed the disjunction between alliteration and stress to happen even in the A + N combination (besides such crowded a-verses as have the *(a)ax* pattern).

Let us now examine cases in which two different readings may be possible. They are, for instance, crowded a-verses which involve pre-caesural combinations with single alliteration on the noun, as in the lines below:

Driuande to þe heȝe dece	dut he not woþe	(222)
Of þe chaunce of þe grene chapel	at cheualrous knyȝtez	(2399)
Syn ȝe be lorde of þe ȝonder londe	þer I haf lent inne	(2440)

The spacing rule dictates stress on the non-alliterating adjective ('heȝe', 'grene', 'ȝonder'), there being a long central dip between this and the first open-class word at verse-opening ('driuande', 'chaunce', 'lorde'); but stress on the alliterating noun might also be a viable option, as this reading, too, can produce a crowded a-verse with a long central dip. J. Turville-Petre also examines the adjective + noun combination occurring at the pre-caesural position. She states that there are 'combinations of simple adjective and noun' that can be regarded as occupying 'one accent only', and treats combinations of *monosyllabic* adjective and *monosyllabic* noun occurring at pre-caesura as such.[23] She then argues that such 'simple' pre-caesural combinations can be divided into three types with different alliterative patterns: (1) *a... aa*, as in verses like 'and fer ouer þe French flod' (13a), (2) *a... ax*, as in 'Of þe were of þe wylde swyn' (1628a), and lastly (3) *a... xa*, as in 'He hasppez his fayre hals' (1388a). Then she argues that all the examples she cites in these three categories 'will fall easily into the

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[23] J. Turville-Petre, 321.

stress-pattern (x)/xx/x,'[24] and that the patterns (1) and (3) have 'accessory alliteration on a heavy syllable in unaccented position'.[25] She thus assigns the same stress-pattern (/x)—i.e. stress on the adjective element—to *all* (except for a few[26]) pre-caesural monosyllabic adjective + monosyllabic noun combinations, even when the adjective does not alliterate. I basically agree with her view, and scan the lines in question as—

Driuande to þe **he**ȝe dece **d**ut he not woþe (222)
Of þe **ch**aunce of þe grene chapel at **ch**eualrous kny**ȝ**tez (2399)
Syn ȝe be lorde of þe ȝonder londe þer I haf lent inne (2440)

—and annotate them as *a...x(a)*, in which the pre-caesural stress falls on the non-alliterating adjective and the alliterating noun is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the post-stress dip. Alliteration on the stress-subordinated element should not perhaps be described as 'accessory'; it is metrically functional and serves to provide the crowded a-verse with the second alliteration, thus fulfilling the alliterative expectations of the listener. However, J. Turville-Petre rightly argues for the possible disjunction between alliteration and stress in the pre-caesural combination, though, in her discussion, she does not seem to formulate any metrical 'rules'. It is not certain whether she also allows disjunction between stress and alliteration in the combinations involving *disyllabic* adjectives (as she treats only the combinations of monosyllabic adjective and monosyllabic noun). However, I extend her principle to the combinations involving disyllabic adjectives, and, as my above scansion shows, take the pre-caesural stress to fall on such disyllabic adjectives—whether they alliterate or not—so long as they are preceded by a long central dip.

Disjunction between stress and alliteration in the *pre-caesural* combination will, in fact, prove to be a metrical feature which manifests itself most conspicuously in *Sir Gawain* and the other two Cotton Nero poems. While, in other alliterative poems—*The Destruction of Troy*, in particular—it is normally (or, in the case of *DT*, always) the alliterating adjective that serves to excuse the insertion of a non-alliterating

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[24] Some of the examples she cites (including 1628a above) scan (x)(x)/xx/x with a long opening dip; but it does not affect her argument.
[25] J. Turville-Petre, 321-2.
[26] She states that the stress on the noun element (i.e. the x/ rhythm) occurs 'only occasionally', either 'in a favourable rhythmic setting xxx/xxx/ which accords with the alliterative pattern', as in lines 284 ('for hit is ȝol and Nwe ȝer'), 1904 (and ryȝt bifore þe horse fete'), and 2430 ('þat wyl I welde with guod wylle'), or in conversation, as in lines 404 ('þat is innogh in Nwe ȝer hit nedes no more'), 2244 ('And I schulde at þis Nwe ȝere ȝeply þe quyte'), and 2400 ('And ȝe schal in þis Nwe ȝer aȝayn to my wonez'); her scansion suggests that she is assuming the sounding of final *–e* in words such as 'Nwe'

noun,[27] the *Gawain* poet seems frequently to exploit the combination to include a non-alliterating but contextually significant adjective, as in:[28]

So bisied him his **ȝonge blod**	and his brayn wylde	(89)
Chymbled ouer hir **blake chyn**	with chalkquyte vayles	(958)
Bot styȝtel þe vpon **on strok**	and I schal stonde stylle	(2252)
As perle bi the **quite pese**	is of prys more	(2364)
How norne ȝe yowre **ryȝt nome**	and þenne no more	(2443)

I will return to this issue in Chapter V, where I will compare the poet's handling of A + N combinations with that of other alliterative poets.[29]

The following a-verse has four major components, three of which form a noun phrase:

Þe ioye of **sayn Jonez day**	watz gentyle to here	(1022)

Out of four open-class words in the a-verse, the last three form a combination of genitive + noun. The genitive itself consists of a combination of adjective and noun. With the application of the spacing rule, the second stress falls on the genitive noun, 'Jonez', which is also highlighted by alliteration. The spacing rule also requires stress on the genitive noun at 1675 and 1968 below, where the pre-caesural combination has the same syntactic construction (i.e. genitive [adjective + noun] + noun); but here, alliteration and stress do not coincide:

Leude, on **Nw ȝerez lyȝt**	longe bifore pryme	(1675)
To dele on **Nw ȝerez day**	þe dome of my wyrdes	(1968)

One may argue that alliteration dictates stress in the combination where both elements do not alliterate, and therefore it is the alliterating noun ('lyȝt' and 'day') that should be stressed. However, this reading would result in producing two different scansions for the three a-verses (1675, 1968, 1022), which share an almost identical syntactic structure. It would be more natural to scan all three a-verses in the same way, and take the pre-caesural stress consistently to fall on the genitive noun ('Jonez', 'ȝerez').

(etymological), 'horse' (genitive), and 'welde' (infinitive); see J. Turville-Petre, 321-2.

[27] See 3.1.6 below.

[28] See also 1264, 1387, 1674, 2183.

These instances of a 'double' combination—i.e. genitive (adjective + noun) + noun—can be treated as variations on a normal A + N combination, and these, too, conform to the spacing rule.

Let us now move on to verse-opening combinations in which disjunction between alliteration and stress seems to be taking place. The crowded a-verses below have an A + N combination whose adjective element seems to be forming a pair with another adjective, transposed to follow the noun it qualifies. The first example involves a verse-opening combination with double alliteration, and the second, one with single alliteration on the noun:[30]

Wyth *sere* sewes and sete	sesounde of þe best	(889)
Bot *hyȝe* bonkkez and brent	vpon boþe halue	(2165)

In each case, the spacing rule dictates stress on the noun ('sewes' and 'bonkkez'), the adjective being stress-subordinated and absorbed into the unstressed prehead. Here, alliteration accompanies stress, and thus there is no question of disjunction between these two. At 538, I similarly stress the noun and suppress the adjective, though, here, alliteration falls on the adjective:

With *gode* cowters and gay	and glouez of plate[31]	(583)

Again, one has to choose to stress either the two adjectives, 'gode' and 'gay', or the noun and the second adjective. Stress on the alliterating elements would still produce a metrical a-verse with a long central dip, but this reading, again, results in creating two different scansions for verses with identical syntactic structure. I prefer to think that stress placement in the combination with single alliteration also follows the spacing rule. Thus, I scan the lines presented on p. 80 above as follows:[32]

Þen grene aumayl on golde	glowande bryȝter	(236)
Þat þe schene blod ouer his schulderes	schot to þe erþe	(2314)

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[29] See 5.5 below

[30] See also 1051a ('A *heȝe* ernde and a hasty'), 1636a ('Bi *fyn* forwarde and faste'), 1763a ('With *smoþe* smylyng and smolt').

[31] For non-alliteration between /g/ and /k/, see 1.4.1 above.

[32] See also 108, 222, 482, 820, 958, 1264, 1387, 1388, 1467, 1562, 1674, 1932, 2183, 2364, 2417, 2430, 2440, 2443.

Stress falls on the second combination element (i.e. noun) and the non-combination component at pre-caesura with a long dip between, and the alliterating adjective is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the opening prelude.

3.1.4 Combinations occurring in crowded a-verses involving only one alliterating open-class word

Crowded a-verses normally have at least two open-class words that alliterate line-internally, whether they both carry metrical ictus or not. However, there are a minority of crowded a-verses in which only one alliterating open-class word occurs. In Chapter II above, I discussed line 1372 ('Thenne comaunded þe lorde in þat sale to samen alle þe meny').[33] The few other examples of a crowded a-verse with only one alliterating open-class word all involve an adjective + noun combination. In the lines below, the only alliteration in the a-verse (annotated as *a*) is provided by either one of the combination elements, while the other non-alliterating stress (*x*) is carried by a non-combination element (thus *x*... *a(x)*):

Oghe to a ȝonke þynk	ȝern to schewe	(1526)
Now farez wel, on Godez half	Gawayn þe noble	(2149)

Here, the alliterating combination elements ('ȝonke', and 'Godez') also carry stress. Similarly, at 2244, 2400, and 332, the only alliteration in the a-verse is provided by one of the combination elements; but here, the alliterating element is *stress-subordinated*:

And I schulde at þis Nwe ȝere	ȝeply þe quyte	(2244)
And ȝe schal in þis Nwe ȝer	aȝayn to my wonez	(2400)
Þe stif mon hym bifore	stod vpon hyȝt	(332)

These a-verses should be annotated as *x*...*x(a)* or (in the case of 332) *(a)x*...*x*, in which the only alliteration in the a-verse is provided by the subordinated combination element. These examples suggest that disjunction between alliteration and stress can occur in the combination even when there is no other alliterating word in the same verse.[34]

There are three instances in which the single alliterating stress in the a-verse (*a*) is

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[33] See 2.4 above.
[34] See also pp39-40 and p. 43 above.

carried by a non-combination element and neither combination element joins the line-internal alliteration:

And Agrauayn a la dure mayn	on þat oþer syde sittes	(110)
Þe knyȝt of þe grene chapel[35]	men knowen me mony	(454)
Ho comez withinne þe chambre dore	and closes hit hir after	(1742)

These a-verses, as they stand, read *a...x(x)*. As adjective + noun combinations can be treated as a single metrical unit which occupies only one stave, the a-verses here and those above are better interpreted as variations on the *ax/ax* pattern, which I have argued is one of the non-*aa/ax* patterns permitted in this poem.[36] The possible disjunction in the combination and the occurrence of a combination with no alliteration in crowded verses with only one alliterating open-class word are, in fact, features that distinguish the *Gawain* poet from the other alliterative poets concerned.[37]

3.1.5 'Compound'-noun phrases

In the following crowded a-verses, the noun is preceded by two adjectives (or, very rarely, adverb + adjective), forming a 'compound'-noun phrase.[38] The crowded a-verses involving such phrases also follow the spacing rule: that is, the first open-class element is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the opening unstressed prelude, so long as the second open-class word is followed by a long dip before the lexical item bearing the pre-caesural stress. The a-verses below should be scanned as *a(a)a* and *a(a)x*:[39]

Of þe depe *double* dich	þat drof to þe place	(786)
With roȝe *raged* mosse	rayled aywhere	(745)

The stress-subordination of the second element may also be true at 118, 953, and

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[35] For the *non*-alliteration between /g/ and /k/, see 1.4.1 above.

[36] See 1.1 above.

[37] The adjective + noun combination in *WA*, *SE*, and *DT* is discussed in 5.5 below.

[38] J. Turville-Petre (316) argues that metrical stress (she uses the term 'accent') falls on the first element, subordinating the second so that the verse produces a disyllabic interval, which she calls the 'standard rhythm', the predominant rhythmic pattern in *Sir Gawain*. Basically, I agree with her view, but my point is slightly different from hers, as stated above.

[39] Other examples are: 'his thik þrawen þyȝez' (579a), 'wyth clene cortays carp' (1013a); 'when þe coldë cler water' (727a), 'of harde hewen ston (789a)', 'þat is þe ryche ryal kyng' (905a), 'vpon þat ryol red cloþe' (2036a).

2166 below:

New *nakryn* noyse	with þe noble pipes	(118)
Rugh *ronkled* chekez	þat oþer on rolled	(953)
And ruȝe *knokled* knarrez	with knorned stonez	(2166)

Lines 118a and 2166a could perhaps be regarded as having a long dip between the second and third open-class words, though it is not clear from the spellings. 'Nakryn' and 'knokled' could be pronounced as *nak(e)ryn* and *knok(e)led*, the variant forms with a glide vowel before the liquid 'r' or 'l'.[40]

The following a-verses, which have the same syntactic structure (i.e. adjective/adverb + adjective followed by a noun) as those above, should, with the application of the spacing rule, read *(a)aa*, *(a)ax* or *(x)aa*, subordinating the first element:

Þe *olde* auncian wyf	heȝest ho syttez	(1001)
Wiȝt wallande ioye	warmed his hert	(1762)
And *fele* þryuande þonkkez	he þrat hom to haue	(1980)
Fayre fannand fax	vmbefoldes his schulderes	(181)
His *longe* louelych lokkez	he layd ouer his croun	(419)

Here, I take 'auncian' (at 1001) as trisyllabic, but it is also possible to treat it as disyllabic (in which case, stress would fall on the first adjective 'olde', stress-subordinating the second). The other examples involve an adjective in *–and(e* or *–lych(e.* J. Turville-Petre appears to assume monosyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e.*[41] But the evidence available from the text strongly suggests that *–and(e* and *–lych(e* are disyllabic when they occur, as here, as the second element of a 'compound'-noun phrase (though, at 419 and 181, the sounding of final *–e* is not indicated by the spelling).[42] Here, disyllabic pronunciation of these suffixes is not metrically required (as the long central dip could also be achieved by the subordination of these second elements), but I prefer to take the first open-class word to be most

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[40] *MED* gives variant forms of 'nakryn' (*nak(e)rin*, pl. gen. of *naker* n.) and 'knokled' (*knokeled*, *knokuld* from *knokel*); the variant form 'nakeryn' occurs also in *Cleanness*: 'And ay þe nakeryn noyse notes of pipes' (1413). As for 'ronkled', *MED* gives such variant forms as *runkled*, *rouncled*, *rungilt*, *ronkled*, *ronkled*, but a form with a medial vowel (*ronkeled*) is not recorded.

[41] J. Turville-Petre, 321.

[42] See 4.3 below. Duggan also suggests the possibility of disyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e*: 'Perhaps the same doublet forms occurred in present participles, though that argument is less secure' (Duggan, 'Final *–e*', 143).

naturally absorbed into the opening dip, which would, at 1762 and 181 above, be absent if it bears stress.

3.1.6 A comparison of A + N combinations in *Sir Gawain* with those in *The Destruction of Troy*

There are two points in which the poet's handling of the A + N combination differs significantly from that of other alliterative poets. In Chapter V, I will present full discussion of the combination in the other two Cotton Nero poems and my three control texts (i.e. *The Destruction of Troy*, *The Wars of Alexander*, and *St Erkenwald*). Here, to illustrate only the major differences, I will briefly describe how the combination is used in one of the controls, *The Destruction of Troy*. In the first 2046 lines of the poem, the A + N combination occurs quite frequently in the a-verse, both at verse-opening and pre-caesura position. Both adjective and noun are often monosyllabic, and either element can bear alliterative stress. It is worth pointing out that in this poem, stress and alliteration always coincide in the *pre-caesural* combinations; when the combination occurs at this position, alliterative stress always falls on the *adjective* and the noun is always a *non*-alliterating word, as in 'and assemblit his sad men' (1289a) and 'þe Grekes to þe gray water' (1407a). The combination occurs at this position 92 times in lines 1-2046, and there is *no* instance (except for two apparent exceptions[43]) in which the noun bears alliterative stress or both elements alliterate. In many pre-caesural combinations, alliterative stress falls even on such minor adjectives as *all*, *bothe*, *own*, and *oþer*.[44] In other words, the A + N combination is used merely as a metrical device to include a contextually required non-alliterating noun as a continuant of an ictus-bearing adjective, and therefore the modifying adjectives in such combinations are mostly devoid of expressive power and suggestiveness. The fact that double alliteration is consistently absent also suggests this. As a result, the combination in *DT* is handled in a mechanical and predictable way.

In contrast, the combination in *Sir Gawain* possesses more flexibility and effectiveness. Alliteration can fall on either element, and double alliteration is quite common. In *DT*, the adjective is a medium by which a non-alliterating noun can be included in a verse, but in *Sir Gawain*, it is the noun that often serves to insert the

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[43] See pp. 214-5 below.

[44] e.g. 'armyt at all peses' (181a), 'þat after hym awne selfe' (276a), 'with Ercules and oþer mo' (819a), 'armet at all peses' (943a), 'in Solas on soche wise' (983a), 'armyn hom at all peces' (1090a), 'with batell

non-alliterating but semantically important adjective. The A + N combination, therefore, gives the poet much more flexibility with which to insert a non-alliterating open-class word at an ictus position. Such a systematic and effective use of the combination is rarely observable in other alliterative works. The subtler use of the A + N combination can bring about various possibilities of slight rhythmic variation in the poem. In this way, the A + N combination in *Sir Gawain* is distinguished from *DT* by its uncommon flexibility and unpredictability.

From the evidence presented above, I now attempt to make generalizations regarding the nature and metrical function of the adjective + noun combination:

Adjective + Noun Combination

(a) The A + N combination co-occurring, in the same verse, with another lexical item which can be a candidate for stress (i.e. an open-class word or a closed-class word with phrasal stress or at the pre-caesural position) is treated metrically as a single unit, occupying only one stave, with stress falling on either element;

(b) All crowded a-verses involving the A + N combination follow the spacing rule: they must, like those which do not involve the combination, have a long central dip between the two stresses, one of which is carried by either one of the two combination elements, and the other by a non-combination component;

(c) In a crowded a-verse involving a *pre-caesural* combination, such obligatory central long dip normally occurs between the non-combination component at verse-opening and the adjective (e.g. 'Dressed on þe dere des' 75a, 'Þe gordel of þe grene silke' 2035a);

(d) Alliteration often accompanies stress in combinations where both elements do not alliterate (e.g. 'Bot hyȝe bonkkez and brent' 2165a, 'Whyle þe hende knyȝt at home' 1731a, 'On botounz of þe bryȝt grene' 220a), but it does not always do so (e.g. 'With gode cowters and gay' 583a, 'Of þe chaunce of þe grene chapel' 2399a). Disjunction between alliteration and stress also takes place when stress on the alliterating combination element would result in a crowded a-verse with a short dip between the resulting two stresses (e.g. 'Þenne ho gef hym god day' 1290a).

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on bothe halfes' (1328a), 'euyn of his owne doughter' (1387a).

Before moving on to discussion of standard a-verses in which an adjective-noun phrase occupies two, instead of one, staves, I will examine adverbs and their distributional pattern in the a-verse, followed by combinations of verb + adverb, which I will argue are often, like the A + N combination, treated metrically as if they were compounds, occupying one stave only, and with stress on either element.

3.2 Adverbs and Adverb + Verb Combinations

In this section, I will examine how adverbs and combinations of verb + adverb behave in the a-verse and what relationship they have with the stress pattern within the verse. Compared with the other traditional word classes, the adverb presents more diversity in its semantic and syntactic functions. Morphologically, adverbs can be categorised into three types,[45] the first two of which are closed classes:

(a) simple adverbs, eg: *vp*, *only*, *out*, *down*, *well*, etc.
(b) compound adverbs, eg: *somewhat*, *whederwarde*, *wherefore*, *þiderwarde*, *þerfore*, *hereinne*, etc.
(c) derivational adverbs, eg: *bilyue*, *luflych*, *bremly*, etc.

Many of the simple adverbs denote position and direction. Some of the compound adverbs containing *here*, *there*, and *where* are equivalents of preposition + *here*, preposition + *it*, and preposition + interrogative, and for this reason Mustaunoja calls such compound adverbs prepositional adverbs.[46] Derivational adverbs usually have the suffix *–e*, *–lic*(*e* , or *–li* (*-ly*).

Syntactically, adverbs can function as either (1) clause element adverbial or (2) premodifier of adjective or adverb. A distinction must be made between grammatical units functioning as clause element A (adverbial) and the same units functioning as a part of a different clause element (adjective phrase, adverb phrase, etc.). Adverbs of

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[45] R. Quirk, S Greenbaum, G. Leech, and J. Svartvik, *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (London, 1985), 438. I follow the general categorization of adverbs presented in this book, though I will refer to Mustanoja and his treatment of adverbs in his *Middle English Syntax* (Tauno F. Mustanoja, *A Middle English Syntax, Part I: Parts of Speech* (Helsinki, 1960)) where relevant.
[46] See Mustanoja, 424-5. In *CGEL* (713), the term 'prepositional adverb' is given to 'a particle which is formally identical to or related to a preposition, and which often behaves like a preposition with ellipted complement': therefore, *past* in 'A car drove past the door' is a preposition, whereas *past* in 'A car drove past' is a prepositional adverb.

Type 1 may function as adjuncts[47] denoting, for example, manner, as in lines like 'Lyȝtly lepez he hym to' (328a), and are thus relatively integrated within the structure of the clause. In contrast, they may have a more peripheral relationship in the sentence, functioning as conjuncts in lines such as 'And þerfore sykyng he sayde' (753a). Adverbs of Type 2 occur particularly with adjectives and adverbs, such as 'ferly' at 1694a ('Ferly fayre watz þe folde'), 'ful' at 42a ('Justed ful jolilé') and 741a ('Into a forest ful dep'). Semantically, too, adverbs have many different roles, such as place, time, manner, degree, negation, etc.[48] Since the syntactic and semantic functions of the adverb are so diverse and heterogeneous, it is worth examining more closely how they are treated in alliterative long lines, including both standard and crowded a-verses.

In his own metrical rules, Duggan treats monosyllabic adverbs as closed-class words and adverbs with two or more syllables as open-class words, and argues that 'alliteration always falls on a stressed syllable', and that alliteration falls on the closed-class words 'only with syntactic inversion or in the absence of a word from the open class'.[49] I have demonstrated, however, that, while the verse-opening position can assimilate even an (alliterating) open-class word into an unstressed prehead (e.g. 'As burne bolde vpon bent' 1465a), the pre-caesural position sometimes requires even a closed-class word to be stressed (e.g. 'Lepe lyȝtly me to' 292a). I have also pointed out that a closed-class word can take both stress and alliteration even where his conditions—syntactic inversion or the absence of an open-class word—are not met (e.g. 'And sayde soþly al same' 673a, 'I shal ware my whyle wel' 1235a, 'Þis haþel heldez hym in' 221a). In other words, it is possible that the same word behaves differently depending on which position in the a-verse (the verse-opening, verse-central, or pre-caesural position) it occurs at. Considering the complexity and diversity of the functions of the adverb, it becomes even more necessary to study the metrical behaviour of adverbs in the a-verse and examine whether or not Duggan's treatment of adverbs based on their syllabic length is an appropriate one. It will be shown that syllabic length is not, in fact, a reliable guide to determining the word class of a given adverb; more relevant is the position in which it occurs, the presence/absence in the same verse of a competing word

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[47] In *CGEL*, the grammatical functions of adverbs as clause element adverbial are categorised into four types: adjuncts, subjuncts, disjuncts, and conjuncts. The first two are relatively integrated within the structure of the clause, whereas the latter two are loosely connected to the other clause elements; see Chapter 8 in *CGEL*.

[48] Quirk et. al. present more detailed classification of the semantic roles of the adverbial. For the sake of clarity, I here list only those which I think are most relevant in the present discussion. Mustanoja classifies adverbs into (1) adverbs of degree and quantity, (2) adverbs of manner, (3) adverbs of time, (4) adverbs of place, and (5) adverbs of negation. But he treats only the adverbs of degree and those of negation in his discussion.

[49] Duggan, 'Meter', 226.

from the open class, and its semantic weight (heavy or light). The first section will focus on adverbs, followed by discussion of the verb + adverb combination.

3.2.1 Adverbs

Monosyllabic adverbs expressing space, time and direction, when they occur at the verse-opening or between two open-class words, normally remain unstressed, like 'þenne' in the following lines:[50]

Þenne set þay þe sabatounz	vpon þe segge fotez	(574)
And henged *þenne* ayþer	bi hoȝez of þe fourchez	(1357)

However, monosyllabic adverbs occurring at verse-opening may take stress and alliteration when they are followed by a pre-caesural A + N combination. At 13 below, the monosyllabic adverb 'fer' co-occurs with two other open-class words in the a-verse. Since Duggan does not permit stress-subordination in the a-verse (and thus would regard 'French' and 'flod' as occupying two full staves), and also since the verse has two alliterating open-class words and involves no syntactic inversion (which triggers stress on a closed-class word), Duggan would most likely scan the line as—

And fer ouer þe French flod	Felix Brutus	(13)

—and regard the first half-line as a standard a-verse with alliterative stress on 'French' and 'flod'. However, I regard the a-verse as a crowded one with a pre-caesural adjective + noun combination, occupying only one stave. The monosyllabic 'fer' thus occupies the other stave in the a-verse and takes alliteration as well, producing a crowded a-verse with the *a...a(a)* pattern:

And fer ouer þe French flod	Felix Brutus	(13)

Monosyllabic adverbs, when they occur at the pre-caesural position, may take stress, with consequent stress-subordination of one of the alliterating open-class words that precede. At 578, monosyllabic *þenne*, which is unstressed at 574 and 1357 on the same page, takes the pre-caesural stress, stress-subordinating the second alliterating

open-class word:[51]

Queme quyssewes þen　　þat coyntlych closed　　(578)

Similarly, in the following lines, the pre-caesural stress falls on monosyllabic *wel*, thus stress-subordinating either the first or second alliterating open-class word:

His surkot semed hym wel　　þat softe watz forred　　(1929)
I shal ware my whyle wel　　quyl hit lastez　　(1235)

Note, again, that stress falls on 'wel' at this position in the line, whether it alliterates or not.

Even if adverbs are disyllabic and should therefore always take stress according to Duggan's rules (as he treats disyllabic adverbs as always open-class words),[52] when they occur at the prelude, they seem, in some cases, to be treated as closed-class words constituting part of the opening prelude in a standard a-verse (rather than stress-subordinated open-class words in a crowded a-verse). Examples are *siþen* and *forþy* in the following lines:[53]

Þat *siþen* depreced prouinces　　and patrounes bicome　　(6)
And *syþen* a crafty capados　　closed aloft　　(572)
Forþy, goude Sir Gawayn　　let þe gome one　　(2118)

If 'siþen' (or 'syþen') and 'forþy' are to be treated as open-class words, these a-verses would have to be regarded as crowded ones with three potential ictus positions. The resultant scansion would be semantically unnatural: as there is only a short dip between the two alliterating open-class words that follow the adverbs, the first stress would, with the application of the spacing rule, have to fall on the non-alliterating and semantically light adverbs, subordinating the alliterating and semantically more important open-class words ('depreced', 'crafty', 'goude'). Therefore, I treat the a-verses in question as *non*-crowded a-verses in which stress falls on the two alliterating elements. Even when verse-opening disyllabic adverbs alliterate, they seem, in the following lines, to be

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[50] Examples are many; see 536, 568, 703, 754, etc.
[51] If trisyllabic pronunciation of 'quyssewës' can be assumed, the first metrical stress falls on this word, subordinating 'queme'.
[52] Duggan, 'Meter', 226.
[53] See also 434, 456, 499, 753, 757, 1518.

treated as closed-class words:

Syþen þay slyt þe slot	sesed þe erber	(1330)
Forþi me for to fynde if þou fraystez	faylez þou neuer	(455)

If line 1330a is to be treated as a crowded a-verse, the spacing rule would, again, require stress on the adverb 'syþen' and stress-subordination on the open-class word 'slyt', which has more semantic weight. This reading is metrically permissible, but seems to me somewhat forced. A more likely, because more natural, reading would be to take the a-verse as a standard one with stress falling on 'slyt' and 'slot'. Line 455a should also be taken as a standard a-verse. The evidence to support this claim is the presence of *for to* at this position: as I shall demonstrate in Chapter IV,[54] *for to*—an alternative form of *to* preceding infinitive—occurs, in the crowded a-verse, *only* immediately before the pre-caesural stress (which is always borne by an infinitive verb) and serves, *always*, to produce a metrically required central long dip, which would be impossible with the monosyllabic *to*; *for to* occurs at verse-opening *only* in the standard a-verse. Since, here, it is obviously 'fraystez' (and not 'fynde', which immediately follows 'for to') that bears the pre-caesural stress, *for to* has to be taken as constituting part of the opening long dip of a standard a-verse.

The treatment of *syþen* and *forþi* as usually closed-class words comes to seem even more appropriate, if one considers the fact that they are, unlike derivative adverbs, conjuncts in grammatical functions,[55] which are less integrated into the whole clause. Their semantic weight, too, as I have mentioned above, is relatively light, compared with that of derivative adverbs. Thus, non-derivative disyllabic adverbs are treated as closed-class words, when there are two other alliterating open-class words in the same verse, and when the adverbs occur at verse-opening or between the two alliterating open-class words. When non-derivative disyllabic adverbs occur at the *pre-caesural* position, however, they *always* take stress (as do any closed-class words which are not syntactically very closely linked to the open-class word immediately preceding). In the following lines, the disyllabic prepositional or compound adverb takes the pre-caesural stress, and the first open-class word is instead stress-subordinated, as we

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[54] See 4.2.

[55] Conjuncts are defined as adverbials which 'have the function of conjoining independent units' (*CGEL*, 631) and which express the speaker's 'assessment of how he views the connection between two linguistic units' (*CGEL*, 632). They are less integrated into the whole clause compared with adjuncts and subjuncts.

have already seen in Chapter II:[56]

Þe lorde loutes þerto	and þe lady als	(933)
Þe lorde luflych aloft	lepez ful ofte	(981)

Whether or not these adverbs alliterate, the pre-caesura position triggers stress on them. The fact that the adverbs rarely join the line-internal alliteration reflects their semantic lightness.

Here is a brief summary of the foregoing discussion:

(1) Duggan regards monosyllabic adverbs as closed-class and those of two or more syllables as open-class; but syllabic length is *not* a relevant criterion to determine the word class of a given adverb;

(2) Monosyllabic adverbs are normally unstressed, but they can, in some cases, take both stress *and* alliteration in the crowded a-verse, even when Duggan's rules—the presence of syntactic inversion or the absence of a word from the open class—are not met (e.g. 'And fer ouer þe French flod' 13a, 'And sayde soþly al same' 673a);

(3) Disyllabic adverbs are normally stressed, but non-derivative adverbs—*syþen*, *forþy*, *þerat*, *þerfore*, etc.—are treated as closed class and will take stress only in the absence of two open-class words in the same verse. When they occur at the pre-caesural position, however, they *always* take pre-caesural stress;

(4) The above points serve to demonstrate that word category (open or closed class) is not applicable to pre-caesural stress, which always falls on the verse-final word, *unless* the verse-final word is so closely *syntactically* linked to the preceding one as to form a continuant of it (e.g. the second element of a nominal/verbal group) equivalent to the unstressed syllables succeeding the stressed syllable of a word.

3.2.2 Verb + simple adverb combinations

There are many a-verses in which the syntactic combination of verb + adverb (or adverb + verb)[57] occurs. Like the adjective + noun combination, a certain type of verb

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[56] See pp. 51-3 above; other examples are 505, 1142, 1155, 1741.

[57] I will henceforth use the phrase 'verb + adverb' to mean both 'verb + adverb' and 'adverb + verb'.

+ adverb seems to be treated metrically as one unit. In this section, therefore, I will examine the a-verses involving verb + adverb and consider whether they share any of the characteristics that the adjective + noun combination shows. I divide verb + adverb combinations into two different types: combinations of verb + simple adverb, and those of verb + derivative adverb. I will first treat the former type.

The following a-verses have combinations of verb + simple adverb of direction:[58]

And þay busken vp bilyue	blonkkez to sadel	(1128)
Liȝtez doun luflyly	and at a lynde tachez	(2176)

'Vp' and 'doun' above are adverbs of direction. But being closely associated with the verbs, they are also adverbial particles, constituting the phrasal verbs 'busken vp' and 'liȝtez doun'. Because, complementing the sense of the verb, these adverbial particles normally have less semantic weight, they are closed-class words and therefore normally unstressed. This is also true when they are separated from the verbs, as in 1337 ('Þen scher þay *out* þe schulderez with her scharp knyuez') and 1341 ('Ryuez hit *vp* radly ryȝt to þe byȝt'). This type of verb + adverb combination normally occurs in a standard a-verse (i.e. a verse with only two possible ictus positions), and stress regularly falls on the alliterating verb and the other alliterating word that takes the pre-caesural stress. Such monosyllabic adverbs as those above are normally non-alliterating.

The adverbs of degree such as 'wel' also remain unstressed. For instance:

For I wene wel, iwysse,	Sir Wowen ȝe are	(1226)

However, when they co-occur with verbs with light semantic weight, the adverbs may take alliterative stress instead of the verbs. In other words, the combinations behave like a single unit or metrically a 'compound' word:

Þay let doun þe grete draȝt	and derely out ȝeden	(817)

Next, I will examine the combination of verb + simple adverb occurring at the pre-caesura position. The adverbs are here those of direction or degree. As was the case with the combination of verb + simple adverb occurring at the verse-opening

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[58] Other examples are 136, 368, 458, 477, 818, 826, 1184, 1192, 1584, 1609, 1703, 1710, 1874, 1901, 2119, 2198, 2249, 2260, 2300, 2319.

position, alliteration and stress consistently falls on the verb:[59]

Bot styþly he start forth	vpon styf schonkes	(431)
Deliuerly he dressed vp	er þe day sprenged	(2009)

Like 'busken vp' (1128a) and 'liȝtez doun' (2176a) above, these adverbs are syntactically very closely tied to the preceding verbs, and can be thus naturally absorbed into the post-stress dip. In this respect, the combinations of monosyllabic verb (verb with monosyllabic stem) + monosyllabic simple adverb behave like the pre-caesural adjective + noun combination with single alliteration on its first element (e.g. 'Fochchez þis fre mon' 1961a). And, as is the case with a-verses involving pre-caesural A + N combinations, the occurrence of a long dip between the first open-class word at verse-opening, which takes the first a-verse stress, and the first combination element (i.e. verb) is, here, too, a constant feature.

Another fine example of a verb + adverb combination treated as a single unit is found in the following lines, in which monosyllabic *wel* occurs at the pre-caesural position:

Wyȝez, whyl þay wysten wel	withinne hem hit were	(1435)
To yow þat, I wot wel,	weldez more slyȝt	(1542)

'Wel' is alliterating in both cases. However, since it is immediately preceded by the verb to which it is syntactically closely linked, the adverb is smoothly integrated into a dip. Again, the occurrence of a long dip between the first open-class word ('Wyȝez', 'yow') and the verb ('wysten', 'wot') indicates the second stress on the latter and the absorption of the adverb into the post-stress dip. But, when a long dip occurs between the verb and the adverb that follows, the latter takes the pre-caesural stress, as we have seen in Chapter II:[60]

His surkot semed hym wel	þat softe watz forred	(1929)
Þe leude lystened ful wel	þat leȝ in his bedde	(2006)

Here, the verb and the adverb occupy two separate staves, and the first open-class word is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the opening dip. Similarly, at 1235 below, ictus falls on the verb and the adverb at the pre-caesura; but here, the second open-class

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[59] See also 432, 1409, 1796.
[60] See 2.5, especially, pp. 61-2.

word is stress-subordinated to produce a long central dip between the resulting two stresses:

I shal ware my whyle wel **quyl** hit lastez (1235)

I attempted to find an instance of the pre-caesural verb + simple adverb combination similar to line 817 ('Þay let doun þe grete draȝt', in which the adverb 'down' takes both stress and alliteration instead of the verb 'let', which has light semantic weight) above, but I found none. But a similar instance is observable in *The Destruction of Troy*:

Bede his doughter come downe and his dere heire (*DT* 389)
Bede his doughter come doune to hir dere fader (*DT* 504)

Again, the semantic weight is carried by 'downe' (or 'doune') rather than 'come'. As these examples suggest, although simple adverbs at this position are normally unstressed, when the verbs are semantically less loaded, they take stress and may, as in the case of 'down' at *SG* 817 above, even alliterate.

When immediately following their verbs, the simple adverbs can come freely at the pre-caesural position without obscuring the caesura, the ictus-bearing verbs being preceded by a long dip before the open-class word at verse-opening, on which the first a-verse ictus falls. The mobility and the occurrence of the long central dip are also metrical features that characterise the adjective + noun combination. I do not think that verses involving such verb + simple adverb combinations should be treated as crowded a-verses, because simple adverbs are closed-class words, which are normally unstressed. However, with this point apart, the above study provides enough evidence to support the following conclusion: the combination of verb + simple adverb behaves as a single metrical unit, a metrical 'compound', in which either element can take stress.

3.2.3 Verb + derivative adverb combinations

The lines below have crowded a-verses, in which combinations of verb + derivative (i.e. open-class) adverb occur at verse-opening, and where, with the application of the spacing rule, the first stress falls on adverbs of two or more syllables, which mostly express manner. But the preceding verbs are also given alliterative prominence,

signalling their semantic weight. For example:[61]

Hef hy3ly þe here	so hetterly he fnast	(1587)
Brayde broþely þe belt	to þe burne seluen	(2377)

In the following lines, the initial stress again falls on the second element, but this time, it is the verb:[62]

Þat bigly bote on þe broun	with ful brode hed	(1162)
Bot lelly layne fro hir lorde	þe leude hym acordez	(1863)

Again, the adverb and verb are both alliterated. The same is true of the crowded a-verses with the combination of adverb + *-ed* participle. Here, too, both first and second elements alliterate, and stress falls on the second:[63]

Were harder happed on þat haþel	þen on any oþer	(655)
And fayre furred wythinne	with fellez of þe best	(880)

All the examples of verb/verb participle + derivative adverb above involve crowded a-verses and have stress on the second element (whether verb/verb participle or adverb) and a following long central dip. Thus, the verse-opening verb + derivative adverb has fixed stress, as opposed to the adjective + noun combination, which has fluctuating stress. Besides, while the adjective + noun combination can have either single or double alliteration, the verse-opening verb + derivative adverb always has double alliteration; in other words, the use of the latter combination is motivated not so much to introduce a non-alliterating open-class word in a verse as to create a heavy verse-opening by inserting an alliterating open-class word at this position. Moreover, the occurrence of the combinations appears to be mostly limited to the verse-opening position, and there are only four examples in this text in which a combination of this type occurs at the pre-caesura position (as opposed to 39 occurrences at verse-opening). Therefore, the combination of verb + derivative adverb has less mobility than that of adjective + noun, which can occur quite freely at either/both verse-opening or/and

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[61] Other examples are 254, 292, 567, 595, 673, 732, 779, 940, 983, 1141, 1186, 1306, 1583, 1585, 1593, 1634, 1825, 1908, 2051, 2291, 2309, 2317, 2325, 2514.

[62] Other examples are 328, 331, 418, 909, 1684, 1877, 1990, 2034.

[63] See also 2029. J. Turville-Petre takes adverb + verb participle at 880 to be a compound adjective; see J. Turville-Petre, 323.

pre-caesura.

Before I move on to the verb + derivative adverb occurring at the pre-caesural position, I would like to discuss the metrical significance of the different word order with which the verse-opening combinations occur. The position of adverb and verb appears to alternate, at least at first glance, in an arbitrary manner. But the word order has, in fact, one specific metrical function: to ensure the long central dip between the stressed second element of the combination and the pre-caesural stress. In the following a-verses, the long central dip would not be affected even if the combination elements were transposed, assuming sounding of grammatical *–es* in 'lepe' (292), 'fayre' (2029), and 'brayde' (2377), as normal with words with a monosyllabic stem:

Lepe lyȝtly me to	and lach this weppen	(292)
Lyȝtly lepez he hym to	and laȝt at his honde	(328)
And sturnely sturez hit aboute	þat stryke wyth hit þoȝt	(331)
Askez erly hys armez	and alle were þay broȝt	(567)
Lachez lufly his leue	at lordez and ladyez	(595)
Were harder happed on þat haþel	þen on any oþer	(655)
And fayre furred wythinne	with fellez of þe best	(880)
Loude laȝed he þerat	so lef hit hym þoȝt	(909)
And seten soberly samen	þe seruise quyle	(940)
Hent heȝly of his hode	and on a spere henged	(983)
And waytez warly þiderwarde	quat hit be myȝt	(1186)
Loutez luflych adoun	and þe leude kyssez	(1306)
He lyȝtes luflych adoun	leuez his corsour	(1583)
Preuély aproched to a prest	and prayed hym þere	(1877)
And fayre furred withinne	wyth fayre pelures	(2029)
Swyþe sweþled vmbe his swange	swetely þat knyȝt	(2034)
Withhelde heterly his honde	er hit hurt myȝt	(2291)
He lyftes lyȝtly his lome	and let hit doun fayre	(2309)
Brayde broþely þe belt	to þe burne seluen	(2377)

On the other hand, where transposition would result in a crowded a-verse with a short central dip, the monosyllabic element (in this case, always a verb) is invariably followed by the disyllabic element (adverb):

Liȝt luflych adoun	and lenge, I þe praye	(254)

And sayde soþly al same	segges til oþer	(673)
Þat broȝt bremly þe burne	to þe bryge ende	(779)
Blwe bygly in buglez	þre bare mote	(1141)
Hef hyȝly þe here	so hetterly he fnast	(1587)
Set sadly þe scharp	in þe slot euen	(1593)
And let lodly þerat	þe lorde for to here	(1634)
And sayde soberly hymself	and by his soth swerez	(2051)
Hent heterly his helme	and on his hed cast	(2317)
And ȝelde ȝelderly aȝayn	and þerto ȝe tryst	(2325)

The final *–e* in 'blwe' (1141),[64] 'sayde' (2051), and 'ȝelde' (2325), followed by 'in', 'hymself', and 'aȝayn', would be suppressed, thus producing only a short central dip. A similar instance is also observed in *Patience*:

Rys radly, he says	and rayke forth even	(*P* 65)

Stress on the second element is also indicated by the fact that where it is certainly (or seems from the spelling to be) monosyllabic or possibly monosyllabic, it is always followed by two or more unstressed syllables before the pre-caesural stress:

And henged heȝe ouer his hede	in hard iisse-ikkles	(732)
Þat bigly bote on þe broun	with ful brode hedez	(1162)
Foundez fast þurȝ þe forth	þer þe felle bydez	(1585)
Bliþe broȝt watz hym drynk	and þay to bedde ȝeden	(1684)
And swere swyfte by his sothe	þat he hit sese nolde	(1825)
Bot to lelly layne fro hir lorde	þe leude hym acordez	(1863)
Haldez heȝe ouer his hede	halowez faste	(1908)
And blyþely broȝt to his bedde	to be at his rest	(1990)

From all the evidence above, the sounding of the adverbial *–e* of *loude* in the following line can be safely assumed:

Laȝen loudë þerat	and luflyly acorden	(2514)

Let us now look at the combination of verb + derivative adverb occurring at the

pre-caesura position. As I have mentioned earlier, there are only four occurrences in this poem, and in each case, the combination is preceded by either another open-class word or an adjective + noun combination. The spacing rule gives the following scansion:

Clowdes kesten kenly	þe colde to þe erþe	(2001)
Þe lorde lyȝtez bilyue	and lachez hym sone	(1906)
A denez ax nwe dyȝt	þe dynt with to ȝelde	(2223)
Now, þrid tyme þrowe best,	þenk on þe morne	(1680)

Note that at 1906, stress falls on *each* element, there being a long dip between the pre-caesural stress (carried by the adverb 'bilyue') and the verb 'lyȝtez'. In the other examples (lines 2001, 2223, 1680), the first combination element is always stress-subordinated: at 2001, the verb 'kesten' is absorbed into the obligatory long central dip (which indicates stress on 'Clowdes' and 'kenly'); at 2223, I take the pre-caesural stress to fall on the second element, 'dyȝt', the adverbial 'nwe' (with pronounced final -*e*) being stress-subordinated to create the obligatory long central dip; and similarly, at 1680, I would take the pre-caesural stress to fall on the second element, 'best', as it has phrasal stress and here more rhetorical force than the preceding verb.[65] And I assume 'þrowe' to be monosyllabic with suppression of final –*e* (subjunctive[66]) and 'tyme' monosyllabic; on this assumption, the spacing rule will dictate stress on 'þrid' and the adverbial 'best', stress-subordinating the alliterating verb.[67] Since these four are the *only* instances of a pre-caesural verb + *derivative* adverb combination, and since, at 1906, the combination occupies two (instead of one) staves, one may safely say that such combinations are, at the pre-caesural position, better treated as two separate open-class words rather than a single metrical unit (in which ictus can fall on either element), and that the second element (i.e. a word closest to the caesura) will always bear ictus.

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[64] Final –*e* in 'blwe' is not grammatically motivated.

[65] Morphologically speaking, *best* is not a derivative adverb. But it is distinct from clearly closed-class words such as *vp* and *down*; besides, like other derivative adverbs, the adverb expresses manner. Considering these points, I treat the adverb as a derivative and therefore open-class adverb.

[66] N. Davis takes the line to mean 'Now "third time turn out best" remember in the morning', in which 'þrowe' is a subjunctive verb.

[67] Other readings are also possible: for instance, if one assumes disyllabic pronunciation of 'þrowe' with sounded final –*e*, the first a-verse stress falls on 'tyme' (instead of 'þrid'). But stress on 'þrid' and 'best' as suggested above seems to me the most desirable reading.

In contrast, the verse-opening verb + adverb combinations can be treated as a single metrical unit, because they occupy only one stave, one of the elements being *always* stress-subordinated (they occur 39 times in this poem, but there is no instance in which both elements take stress). Yet it is important to emphasise that these verse-opening combinations show three features which distinguish them from adjective + noun combinations: (1) fixed stress-pattern (always on the second element); (2) fixed alliterative pattern (always double alliteration); (3) word order which is determined to ensure a long central dip. And I would argue that the verse-opening verb + derivative adverb combination is exploited to create a heavy verse-opening, a stylistic feature which in fact characterises the works of the *Gawain* poet, *St. Erkenwald*, and *The Wars of Alexander* and distinguishes them from *The Destruction of Troy*, in which such verb + adverb combinations never (or almost never) occur.[68]

3.3 Standard a-verses with combinations as the only two open-class words

There are also combinations of adjective and noun which form the two staves of an a-verse. In crowded a-verses in which adjective + noun combinations occupy only one stave, there is always a long dip between the non-combination component and one of the combination elements. Such crowded a-verses may also have a second or even a third long dip at either/both verse-opening or/and verse ending. J. Turville-Petre points out that adjective + noun combinations, where one element is not metrically subordinated, usually form 'short-interval rhythms'—i.e. have a short dip between the two stresses they form.[69] As the lists below demonstrate, its occurrence in combination with a short central dip (54 lines) is almost twice as frequent as that with a long central dip (28 lines)—though the latter type does also occur in a substantial minority of lines. Interestingly, the a-verses in which the adjective + noun combination occupies two staves occur more frequently in passages of elaborate description than in rapid action or direct speech. Such verses serve to slow the pace, occupying the same time unit as half-lines involving two or more clause elements such as S + V and S + V + A. The examples of the adjective + noun combination of this type can be divided into: (a)

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[68] See 5.6 below.

[69] 'The combination usually forms short-interval rhythms, and is common in both verses. . .' (J. Turville-Petre, 318).

a-verses with a short dip between the two metrical stresses, and (b) those with a long dip. An A + N combination occurs in a-verses with no stress subordination about 87 times (4.30%) in the poem.[70] The following are all the examples which I found in the text.

3.3.1. Standard a-verses with a short central dip

Standard a-verses of this type have the rhythmic structure annotatable as (x)(x)xx/(x)/(x...).[71] One underlying rule that seems to be governing the a-verses with this pattern is *the requirement of a long dip* at the verse-opening: that is, when the a-verse has only a short dip between the two stresses, the first stress must be preceded by a long opening dip. A dip after the second (or pre-caesural) stress may or may not be long, but, as I have demonstrated in Chapter II, the verse-final dip must be occupied by elements syntactically very closely linked to the word on which the pre-caesural stress falls. It is often, as in the standard a-verses below, a continuant (or continuants) of the same word, or one closely linked sense unit (very rarely two) which involves no syntactic inversion. The standard a-verse with a short or no central dip occurs 54 times:

In mony turned tyme	(22)
And an outrage awenture	(29)[72]
Þe most kyd kny3tez	(51)
Vpon such a dere day	(92)
Of sum mayn meruayle	(94)
Þis watz þe kynges countenaunce	(100)
At vch farand fest	(101)
Of a kyngez capados	(186)
In a swoghe sylence	(243)
And þat my legge lady	(346)
Let the naked nec	(420)[73]

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[70] The figure includes 4 dubious a-verses (797a, 798a, 1757a, 1886a), which are listed in 3.3.3 below. Some of these a-verses have genitive + noun combination: e.g. 'Þat ar in Arþurez hous' (2102). Owing to the fact that this variant combination occurs much less frequently than the other, these combinations are here treated together; however, they are treated separately where necessary.

[71] Parenthesis indicates an optional item.

[72] This a-verse and line 572a have the pattern (xx)xx/x/xx, which J. Turville-Petre does not canvas as one of her subtypes of short-interval rhythms, though (xx)xx/x/x is; see J. Turville-Petre, 317.

[73] Because 'let' frequently behaves as a function element, this half-line can be regarded as having only

With a runisch rout (457)
Among þise kynde caroles (473)
Þere watz much derne doel (558)
Fyrst a tulé tapit (568)
And syþen a crafty capados (572)
Þat wyth a bryȝt blaunner (573)
And syþen þe brawden bryné (580)
And wel bornyst brace (582)
Þerfore on his schene schulde (662)
Among þe castel carnelez (801)
And þenne a meré mantyle (878)
Of a broun bleeaunt (879)
To þe hersum euensong (932)
Into a cumly closet (934)
Þurȝ her dere dalyaunce (1012)
Of þe wymne worschip (1032)
Þer watz seme solace (1085)
And syþen with Frenkysch fare (1116)
Into þe comly castel (1366)
Þer as þe rogh rocher (1432)
Þaȝ þe schauen schaft (1458)
Withinne þe comly cortynes (1732)
In a mery mantyle (1736)
Of such a selly soiorne (1962)
Whyle þe wlonkest wedes (2025)
Þer þe ruful race (2076)
For now is gode Gawayn (2214)
Wherefore þe better burne (2278)
On þe fautlest freke (2363)

There are 6 standard a-verses involving adjectives in *–lych*:

With mony luflych lorde (38)
Wyth mony luflych loupe (792)
And wyth a luflych loke (1480)

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two open-class words, with a long initial dip; see also p. 54 above for 'function' elements.

Þat wyth his hiȝlich here	(183)
To þe comlych quene	(469)
And alle þe godlych gere	(584)

In Chapter IV, I will study the distributional pattern in the long line of *–ly/-lych(e* adjectives and adverbs, and demonstrate that *–lych(*e is disyllabic where metre requires—though the spelling only occasionally indicates the sounding of final *–e*.[74] Occasional disyllabic pronunciation of *–lych(e* is confirmed in the b-verse, where it normally serves to create the obligatory long dip (e.g. 'comlyche hade' 648b, 'semlych ryche' 882b, etc.). The same is probably true of the a-verse, but here, for the sake of clarity, I simply assume (as the spelling indicates) monosyllabic pronunciation of *–lych(e*, and take these verses to have a short central dip. More relevant is the fact that, whether final *–e* is sounded or not, these verses would still have a long opening dip.

J. Turville-Petre argues that in 'short-interval' rhythms (a short dip between the two stresses) alliteration is always regular (falling on the two a-verse staves and the head stave of the b-verse), and deviant alliterative patterns only occur in the 'standard' rhythm (a long central dip between the two stresses).[75] However, the following a-verses have non-*aa/ax* patterns:

Boþe þe kynges sistersunes[76]	and ful siker kniȝtes	(111)
Wyth a lyȝtly vrysoun	ouer þe auentayle	(608)
Vpon bastel rouez	þat blenked ful quyte	(799)
Of þe grene chapel	quere hit on grounde stondez	(1058)
And of þat ilk Nw Ȝere	bot neked now wontez	(1062)
Now with þis ilk swyn	þay swengen to home	(1615)
And euer oure luflych knyȝt	þe lady bisyde	(1657)
At þe grene chapel	when he þe gome metes	(1753)

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[74] See 4.3 below.

[75] J. Turville-Petre, 319: 'It is noteworthy that in short-interval rhythms alliteration regularly falls on both accents of the a-verse and on the first of the b-verse. It is only in standard rhythm that we find deviant alliterative patterns'. She treats lines 520a ('to bide a blysful blusch') and 560a ('to dryȝe a delful dynt') as rare exceptions, which have extra alliteration with short-interval rhythms; she appears to be taking the a-verses to have stress on 'blysful' and 'blusch', and 'delful' and 'dynt' respectively. However, since I take these a-verses to have stress on 'bide' and 'blusch' (at 520), and 'dryȝe' and 'dynt' (at 560), these half-lines are also regarded as having a long central dip (or, in her terms, a long-interval rhythm).

[76] It is possible to take 'sistersunes' to occupy two staves, with stress on its first and third syllables (i.e. 'sistersunes'); but considering lines 100 ('Þis watz þe kynges countenaunce') and 186 ('Of a kyngez capados'), which have the same (*kynges* + noun) syntactic structure to that of line 111 here, I prefer to take the compound as occupying one stave only. If one assumes the pre-caesural stress on the *third* (instead of the first) syllable of 'sistersunes', the a-verse would have a long central dip.

Lines 608, 799, 1058, 1062, 1615, 1657, and 1753 have *ax/ax* (*xa/ax*) and lines 111 and 1615 have *ab/ba*. These a-verses thus suggest that a deviant alliterative pattern can happen in combination with short-interval rhythms as well.

3.3.2 Standard a-verses with a long central dip

A-verses with this pattern have a long dip between the two stresses, and so may not always have a long dip in the prehead. They are thus annotated as (x)(x)x/xx(x)/(x...) and occur in 29 lines.

And þe louelokkest ladies	(52)
And he þe comlokest kyng	(53)
On þe sellokest swyn	(1439)
Þat comloker knyȝt	(869)
Hit watz þe myriest mute	(1915)
Hit is þe corsedest kyrk	(2196)
What, is þis Arþures hous,	(309)
Þat ar in Arþurez hous	(2102)
Þe werbelande wynde	(2004)
And þaȝ þe glyterande golde	(2039)
And mony oþer menskful	(555)
And þe teccheles termes	(917)
Hit is þe tytelet token	(1515)
Of þat chargeaunt chace	(1604)
With al þe mannerly merþe	(1656)
With þat conable klerk	(2450)

Non-*aa/ax* patterns occur in the following lines:

Of sum auenturus þyng	an vncouþe tale	(93)
Þus in Arthurus day	þis aunter bitidde	(2522)

In the lines below, the *-lych(e* adjectives may have developed a glide vowel, which is represented in the spelling. Again, for the sake of clarity, I assume monosyllabic

pronunciation of *–lych(e*, and thus scan these adjectives as trisyllabic words with sounding of a glide vowel:

Wolde ȝe, worþilych (<OE. *weorþlic*) lorde	(343)
And þe wynnelych (<OE. *wynnlic*) wyne	(980)
Of mony borelych (<OE. *borlīce*) bole	(766)
And þe borelych burne	(2148)
With a borelych bytte	(2224)

The following lines, if the sounding of final *–e* in present participle *–ande* is assumed, would also fall into this pattern:

When þe donkande dewe	(519)
Þus wyth laȝande lotez	(988)
Wyth such a crakkande kry	(1166)
Wyth a starande ston	(1818)
And wyth a rynkande rurde	(2337)
And þe blykkande belt	(2485)

It seems, from the lists above, that the metrical restriction governing the rhythmic structure of the b-verse is also working in the a-verse, though the rules are not entirely identical. Duggan stipulates that b-verse rhythm must be either (x)/(x)(x)xx/(x) or (x)(x)xx/(x)/(x); that is, the b-verse must have one and only one long dip before or after the first b-verse stave. Similarly, the a-verse must have one long dip: it must occur, if it is a crowded a-verse, between the two stresses; if it is a standard a-verse, either before or after the first stress; but the a-verse, both crowded and standard, can also have a second or even a third long dip. That is, the a-verse can have two or three long dips, while the b-verse cannot. But it may be safely said that the fundamental metrical structure of the two half-lines is basically the same, and the distributional restriction governing the a-verse dip roughly mirrors that of the b-verse. From these points above, we may now conclude that both crowded and standard a-verses are governed by similar distributional rules: both require a long dip either at the opening or between the two stresses, though the long central dip is the metrical condition in the former. This is further evidence that crowded a-verses can and should be read with the basic two-beat rhythm. What distinguishes the rhythm of alliterative metre from the alternate rhythm of Chaucer's iambics is *the structural significance of a long dip in both half-lines*. The

requirement of one long dip before or after the initial stress of each verse is the most fundamental and crucial difference in metrical structure between the unrhymed alliterative long line and the rhymed verse with alternate stressed-unstressed rhythm (which is found, in *Sir Gawain*, in the bob and wheel).

3.3.3 Unmetrical standard a-verses

I have studied all the lines (excluding the bobs and wheels) in the poem, and below I list standard a-verses which do not fit the rhythmic rule above: that is, those which have no long dip either before or after the initial stress. I found 15 unmetrical a-verses in this text (0.74%):

Debated busyly	aboute þo giftes	(68)
And layte as lelly	til þou me, lude, fynde	(449)
Chalkwhyt chymnees	þer ches he innoȝe	(798)
Vch segge ful softly	sayde to his fere	(915)
So god as Gawayn	gaynly is halden	(1297)
Þe lady luflych	com laȝande swete	(1757)
Þen kest þe knyȝt	and hit come to his hert	(1855)
And þer bayen hym	mony braþ houndez	(1909)
Munt as maȝtyly	as marre hym he wolde	(2262)
Þe hurt watz hole	þat he hade hent in his nek	(2484)

The following 5 a-verses involve French-derived nouns. They are unmetrical if one assumes the second stress to fall on the first syllable of each noun:

With coruon coprounes	craftyly sleȝe	(797)
And heȝly honowred	with haþelez aboute	(949)
Þe mon hem maynteines	ioy mot þay haue	(2053)
With merþe and mynstralsye	wyth metez at hor wylle	(1952)
Ne kest no kauelacion	in kyngez hous Arthor	(2275)

We have seen, however, that the *Gawain* poet occasionally writes verses with the non-*aa/ax* patterns and those in which alliteration and stress do not coincide. Therefore, it may be possible to scan these verses as follows:

With coruon coprounes	craftyly sleȝe	(797)
And heȝly honowred	with haþelez aboute	(949)
Þe mon hem maynteines	ioy mot þay haue	(2053)
With merþe and mynstralsye	wyth metez at hor wylle	(1952)
Ne kest no kauelacion[77]	in kyngez hous Arthor	(2275)

These would become metrical if the second stress is taken to fall on the second, third, or fourth syllable of the noun; if this is the case, *SG* has only 10 (instead of 15) unmetrical a-verses (0.49%). In the case of line 1952a, one could alternatively emend the a-verse to *With merþe and with mynstralsye* by inserting the preposition, *with*; the verse would then have a long dip between the two stresses.

The following 6 a-verses are metrical if the etymological or grammatical medial or final /e/ is sounded (though the spelling does not indicate at 1652a and 1886a):

Such glaum andë gle[78]	glorious to here	(46)
Much glam and gle	glent vp þerinne	(1652)
With comlych caroles	and alle kynnes ioye	(1886)
Þer tournayëd tulkes	by tymez ful mony	(41)
Hemë (<OE, *gehǣme*) wel-haled	hose of þat same	(157)
Þennë (<OE. *þænne*) lyst þe lady	to loke on þe knyȝt	(941)

3.4 Crowded b-verses

There are b-verses in which three open-class words occur. Most of them involve adjective + noun combinations, which can be treated as occupying one stave only, just as they do in the a-verse when they form two out of three (normally) open-class words. The 'compound'-noun phrase occurs in some crowded b-verses (e.g. 1116 and 1751 below), in which one of the 'compound' elements is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the obligatory long dip. The following are the examples:[79]

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[77] Cf. 1882 ('And of absolucioun he on þe segge calles'), in which the a-verse stress is most likely to fall on the second and fourth syllable of 'absolucioun' (i.e. 'absolucioun').
[78] The *–ande* is here taken as a present participle rather than the conjunctive *and*; see also 4.3 for the possible disyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e*.
[79] I have emboldened the letters which alliterate within the line.

þe stif kyng hisseluen (107b), on Nw 3erez morn (453b), and fele fayre lotez (1116b), of mony þro þo3tes (1751b), þat dere Vter after (2465b), etc.[80]

In some other cases, the extra open-class words are verbs with little semantic weight, such as 'let' and 'quoth', and they, too, can be metrically subordinated to the other two open-class words. For instance:

he *hade* a holyn bobbe (206b), *quoþ* Wawan to þe kyng (343b), *let* alle þis cort rych (360b), Iwysse I *wot* neuer (1487b),[81] etc.[82]

Interestingly, 'God' can be reduced into an unstressed word in lines like 'if God me let wolde' (1063b), and so perhaps in 'er God hym grace sende' (1837b) as well, though, there, the line alliterates on /g/. There are a few examples of a noun + noun combination, which could also be treated as occupying one stave only, as in 'by lynde-wodez euez' (1178b), 'a myst-hakel huge' (2081b), and 'with chalkquyte vayles' (958b).

Even b-verses with only two open-class words naturally conform to established b-verse rhythms: that is, one of them may be stress-subordinated to a closed-class word at the last stave (since, unlike the a-verse, the b-verse cannot have more than one unstressed syllable after the line-final stress[83]), as in verses like 'on hy3e horses weren' (1138b), 'clere ly3t þenne' (1649b),[84] and 'sayde þe burde þenne' (1846b).

There are also crowded b-verses which have three open-class words, but which do not fit any of the categories above: they involve an idiomatic two-word phrase (e.g. 'tayt makez'), an interjection,[85] or an adverb of degree modifying an adjective or verb. In these b-verses, too, one of the first two open-class words is stress-subordinated and absorbed into a long dip, the line-final ictus being always carried by the third

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[80] Other examples are 124, 158, 194, 195, 482, 554, 580, 600, 603, 620, 698, 702, 731, 823, 854, 857, 885, 890, 1037, 1038, 1138, 1142, 1179, 1392, 1611, 1631, 1633, 1669, 1817, 1885, 1963, 2241, 2275, 2318, 2340, 2369; 195, 554, 580, 600, 702, 1179 lack a long dip, and the same is true of 620, 854, 857, and 1817, if one takes 'golde' as a noun rather than an adjective (where the pronunciation of final *–e* would be justified).

[81] It is possible to place metrical stress on 'wot' rather than 'iwysse'.

[82] See also 454, 556, 815, 979, 1091, 1208, 1209, 1213, 1383, 1489.

[83] Duggan, 'Meter', 231.

[84] For the b-verse to be metrical, the final *–e* of 'clere' (<OFr. *cler*) must be pronounced. 'Ly3t' is perhaps to be regarded as plural in sense ('torches').

[85] Quirk et. al. treat interjections, together with numerals, as two anomalous classes which cannot be categorised into either closed or open classes; see 2.42 in *CGEL*. See also their comment on p. 74: 'It can be argued that interjections form a relatively open class because they can be rather freely created by onomatopoeia'.

open-class:

hit fayr innoghe þo3t (803b), þe lorde hit tayt makez (988b), and hay, hay, cryed (1445b), a wonder breme noyse (2200b).

CHAPTER IV

THE METRICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF DOUBLET FORMS

Since Duggan adopts the potential three- (or even four-) stave theory, he does not seem to assume any stress subordination in verses with three or more possible ictus positions.[1] However, I have already argued that, at least as far as *Sir Gawain* is concerned, each half-line has only two ictus positions, and that stress and alliteration do not necessarily coincide.[2] The purpose of this chapter is to present some evidence to support this claim. Here, I will be throughout concerned with doublet forms such as *on/vpon mold, to/for to* + infinitive, *-ly/-lych(e* adjectives and adverbs, etc. I will study their distributional pattern in the long line, and argue that selection from doublet forms is, in many cases, determined by the demands of metre, and that it serves, in the crowded a-verse, one particular metrical purpose: to mark on which two words ictus falls. In the first section below, I will examine the behaviour of stock prepositional phrases involving *on/vpon.* In the later sections, I will discuss the metrical significance of *to/for to* + infinitive, intensifiers such as *ful*, *–ly/-lych(e* adjectives and adverbs, and the present participle *–and(e.* In the process of analysis, I will also discuss the status of final *–e* in the infinitive, *–lych(e*, and *–and(e.*[3]

4.1 Prepositional phrases and their metrical significance

In this section, I will pay particular attention to the distribution and behaviour of stock prepositional phrases—or 'tags' in Oakden's terminology[4]—in both half-lines. *On mold, on fold, on lofte*, etc. are some of those conventional phrases frequently encountered in alliterative poetry, especially at verse-ending (i.e. line-ending and

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[1] See Introduction for discussion on the three-stave verse theory and the complexities and inconsistencies that it entails for one to produce a well-defined account of what have been regarded as 'extended' verses.
[2] See Chapters II and III.
[3] On final *–e*, see the excellent study by Donna Minkova, *The History of Final Vowels in English: The Sound of Muting*, Topics in English Linguistics 4 (Berlin and New York, 1991); her study also includes a survey of previous findings concerning final *–e*.
[4] J. P. Oakden, *Alliterative Poetry in Middle English: A Survey of the Traditions* (Manchester, 1935), 381.

pre-caesura position).[5] This phenomenon is sometimes considered in the context of oral poetry, or minstrelsy, in which such redundant elements serve to retard narrative pace, and thereby help the memory of the reciter and facilitate information delivery for the listener. Marie Borroff pointed out that the potential for poetic expression cannot completely be disregarded in the use of stock expressions in such works as *Sir Gawain*.[6] But as the term 'tag' suggests, few scholars would disagree that these conventional phrases, especially at the pre-caesural position where alliteration is normally required, are prompted largely by alliterative demands.

Redundancy in the form of stock expressions is often regarded as stylistically unfortunate, producing 'an effect of monotony', as pointed out by J. A. Burrow.[7] He also suggests that the revival poems, even the works of the *Gawain* poet, suffer a stylistic 'fault' which is mostly absent in the classical Old English verse: 'the complex formulaic techniques of the *Beowulf* poet rarely create that effect of stylistic facility which is so common in the poems of the Revival.'[8] But before making a final judgement about the use of conventional tags in Middle English alliterative verse, some questions need to be asked. If these prepositional phrases were indeed used only as an easy way to achieve the second alliteration in an alliterative line, why do they occur, no less frequently than at the pre-caesura position, at line-closure as well, where no such alliterative demand is required? Why do they, in both positions, produce, nearly always, a *long dip* between the prepositional complement and the open-class word that

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[5] Stock prepositional phrases are sometimes called 'formulaic' phrases. A study on the nature of formulaic phrases or 'formulas' and their oral-formulaic usage in Middle English alliterative poetry was undertaken by R. A. Waldron, 'Oral-Formulaic Technique and Middle English Alliterative Poetry', *Speculum* 32 (1957), 792-804. He demonstrates that alliterative poets systematically employ certain syntactical 'moluds', which include not only prepositional phrases but also syntactic frameworks extending beyond them (verb + prepositional phrase, etc.), which alliterative poets might well have availed themselves of to satisfy the various—rhythmic and alliterative—demands of the metre. For other discussions of formulaic composition in Middle English alliterative verse, see J. Finlayson, 'Formulaic Technique in *Morte Arthure*', *Anglia* 81 (1963), 372-93; L. D. Benson, *Art and Tradition in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1965), 131-7; R. F. Lawrence, 'The Formulaic Theory and its Application to English Alliterative Poetry', *Essays on Style and Language: Linguistic and Critical Approaches to Style*, ed. R. Fowler (London, 1966), 166-83; 'Formula and Rhythm in *The Wars of Alexander*', *English Studies* 51 (1970), 97-112; Duggan, 'The Role of Formulas in the Dissemination of a Middle English Alliterative Romance', *Studies in Bibliography* 29 (1976), 265-88; J. D. Johnson, 'Formulaic Thrift in the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*', *MÆ* 47 (1978), 255-61; V. Krishna, 'Parataxis, Formulaic Density, and Thrift in the *Alliterative Morte Arthur*', *Speculum* (1982), 63-83; E. Suzuki, 'Middle English Alliterative Poetry and the Oral Formulaic Theory' (in Japanese), in *Middle English Alliterative Poetry: Its Language and Style*, ed. E. Suzuki (Tokyo, 1989), 31-54.; 'Oral-Formulaic Approach to Middle English Alliterative Style' (in Japanese), in *Middle English Alliterative Poetry: Its Language and Style*, ed. E. Suzuki (Tokyo, 1989); P. Hartle, *Hunting the Letter: Middle English Alliterative Verse and the Formulaic Theory* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999).

[6] Borroff, 70-3.

[7] J. A. Burrow, *Ricardian Poetry* (London, 1971), 26.

[8] *Op. cit.*, 27.

immediately precedes? And last but by no means least, why do they occur in doublet forms?—*on mold* and *on fold* also occur in the trisyllabic form of *vpon mold* and *vpon lofte.* At first sight, the variation seems arbitrary. But it seems likely that the distribution is determined by rhythmic demands, just as is the case in Chaucer's iambic metre. The discovery by Duggan of the b-verse rhythmic constraints indeed urges us to raise such questions. If the stock phrases, as I will argue, function other than as mere alliterative conveniences, our view of 'style' regarding the alliterative verse may need to be slightly modified; patterned and predictable rhythm may be, for the alliterative poets, if not for Anglo-Saxon poets, a matter of great concern, perhaps as important as sense and context; and it may be that such rhythmic patterns constitute a deeper structural principle than alliterative ones in the alliterative metre. The relation between rhythm and alliteration will be discussed in the latter part of this section, which treats prepositional phrases in general. I want first to demonstrate that the stock prepositional phrases have one specific metrical function: to create a long dip between two metrical stresses, and in crowded a-verses, in particular, to indicate where such stresses fall.

I shall look at six different stock phrases with doublet forms: *on/vpon mold*, *on/vpon fold*, *on/vpon hyȝe* (*hyȝt*), *in/vpon lond*, *on/vpon bent*, and *on/vpon lyve.* It is significant that all share the same distributional characteristics. I list all instances found in *Sir Gawain*, and *Patience*, and *Cleanness* in the appendices, which are placed at the very end.

On/vpon lofte: in the b-verse, in cases where the obligatory long dip would result with either form, *on* is by far the preferred choice, and creates the most common b-verse rhythm (x)/xx/x (except *C* 1407):

If þay haf don as þe dyne	dryueȝ *on lofte*	(*C* 692)
Þe grete God in his greme	bygynneȝ *on lofte*	(*C* 947)
Cler claryoun crak	cryed *on lofte*	(*C* 1210)
Wyth tool out of harde tre	and telded *on lofte*	(*C* 1342)
Lyfte logges þerouer	and *on lofte* coruen	(*C* 1407)
Þe gay coroun of golde	gered *on lofte*	(*C* 1444)
With alle þe bur in his body	he ber hit *on lofte*	(*G* 2261)
For hit watz brod at þe boþem	boȝted *on lofte*	(*P* 449)

Vpon, too, can occur in this position, with a consequent trisyllabic interval, creating the long dip:

Lyfte laddres ful longe	and *vpon lofte* wonen	(*C* 1777)
Ande eft a ful huge he3t	hit haled *vpon lofte*	(*G* 788)

However, *vpon* must occur when there would otherwise be no long dip in the b-verse:

And a wyndow wyd vponande	wro3t *vpon lofte*	(*C* 318)

Hoven and *heven* in the following lines may well be monosyllabic, as the unstressed *e* in '-ven' is probably elided before the nasal *n*, when it is followed by an unstressed syllable (i.e. 'vp-')[9]:

Whyl he wat3 hy3e in þe heuen	houen *vpon lofte*	(*C* 206)
Hit wat3 hous inno3e to hem	þe heuen *vpon lofte*	(*C* 808)

Conversely, *on* appears where disyllabic *vpon* would render the b-verse unmetrical by producing two long dips:

Who-so hym lyked to lyft	*on lofte* wat3 he sone	(*C* 1649)

Also, when the phrase is preceded by two (not one) unstressed syllables at b-verse opening, *on* seems again the preferred choice to avoid what seems to be a 'dis-preferred' four-syllable dip in the b-verse:

þer he lafte hade oure lorde	he is *on lofte* wonnen	(*C* 1004)
For lay þeron a lump of led	and hit *on loft* flete3	(*C* 1025)

It thus seems that the poet exploits the doublet forms to write regular b-verses; or it may be said that rhythm determines the poet's selection from doublet forms of stock prepositional phrases in the b-verse. This is probably true of the a-verse as well—as would be likely, if it is, as I have been arguing, governed by similar rhythmic rules. At the pre-caesura position, *on* is used when the first stress is occupied by a polysyllabic

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[9] D. Attridge points out that an unstressed vowel may be dropped (or elided) before a consonant (especially, *l*, *r*, and *n*) when it is followed by another unstressed syllable, and lists as examples such words as *heaven/heav'n*, *devil/dev'l*, and *general/gen'ral*; see *Poetic Rhythm*, 126-30.

word, thus creating a disyllabic (occasionally trisyllabic) interval between stresses:

And ȝet of lykynges *on lofte*	letted, I trowe	(*C* 1803)
Þer watz louyng *on lofte*	when þay þe londe wonnen	(*P* 237)

But when the stressed word is monosyllabic, the poet's choice is *vpon*:

Þat ber the lamp *vpon lofte*	þat lemed euermore	(*C* 1273)

The use of *vpon*, as in the b-verses, is here clearly for the purposes of creating a long dip interval between the two metrical stresses on 'lamp' and 'lofte', the first open-class word 'ber' being absorbed into an opening dip. It is important that stress assignment is here determined not so much by alliteration as rhythm (the length of a central dip): 'ber' is stress-subordinated not because it is unalliterated but because it is followed by two other open-class words with a long-dip interval.

Thus, the doublet forms in the a-verse behave in the same way as those in the b-verse: either form may occur when preceded by only one unstressed syllable; when preceded by none, *vpon* is consistently used; but *vpon* is avoided when preceded by more than one unstressed syllable. They also serve, in the crowded a-verse, consistently to create a long dip between the head noun (which bears the pre-caesural stress) and the open-class word immediately preceding, so that the first a-verse stress will fall on this word, stress-subordinating the first open-class word at verse-opening; in other words, the doublets serve to produce most typical crowded a-verses in which the first open-class word at verse-opening is stress-subordinated and absorbed into the unstressed prelude (e.g. *(a)aa* and *(x)aa*). The patterns observed in *on/vpon lofte* apply to all the other tags. I list the examples found in the manuscript in the appendices.

There are 10 occurrences of *on/vpon mold*,[10] and five of these occur as *vpon mold* in the standard a-verse where the first stress is born by a monosyllabic open-class word and where *on mold* would produce a short interval between stresses (*C* 558a, *C* 613a, *C* 1656a, *G* 914a, *G* 1795a). But *on mold* appears where the stress-bearing open-class word is polysyllabic ('maȝty' *C* 279a, 'meschefeȝ' *C* 708a). The same is true of crowded a-verses where the prepositional phrase is preceded by an adjective + noun combination (*C* 514a, *G* 964a). At *C* 1114b, *on mold* is preferred to *vpon mold*, again to avoid four unstressed syllables.

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[10] See 1 on p. 305.

There are 13 instances of *on/vpon fold* in this manuscript,[11] and 6 of these (*C* 251a, *C* 356a, *G* 196a, *G* 396a, *G* 642a, *G* 1275a) involve *vpon folde* in a standard a-verse with first stress on a monosyllabic word or a disyllabic one with stress on its second syllable ('afyaunce', *G* 642). *Vpon* also occurs in a crowded a-verse (*G* 676a, *C* 1175a, *G* 2373a) where the second open-class word is a monosyllabic and (non-)combination element or disyllabic one ('fader') which can be reduced to a monosyllabic one (an unstressed vowel being elided before liquid/nasal + another word beginning with an unstressed syllable). As we saw in *C* 1273a ('Þat ber þe lamp vpon lofte') above, the use of *vpon* in this environment indicates that stress is to fall, at *G* 676a, on the second ('fere') and third ('folde') open-class words, stress-subordinating the first alliterating open-class word ('fynde'). Line 2373a provides corroborative evidence of the possible disjunction between alliteration and stress in the adjective + noun combination;[12] the selection of disyllabic *vpon* (and not monosyllabic *on*) strongly suggests that stress falls on the non-alliterating noun element, 'word', rather than the alliterating adjective. At *C* 403b *on folde* occurs to avoid two long dips in the b-verse.[13] *Vpon* can occur when the prepositional phrase is preceded by only one unstressed syllable (*C* 1644b), with a resultant trisyllabic verse-opening dip. But *on* is used at *C* 1043b, again to avoid four unstressed syllables in the dip. Considering the evidence against a dip of that length in the b-verse, the same syllabic restriction in the long dip may be operative in the a-verse. If this is the case, *C* 1147a should perhaps be emended to *on folde*:

To defowle hit euer *vpon folde* fast he forbedes (*C* 1147)

If one takes the first a-verse stress to fall on 'defowle', this a-verse would be the only instance (in the manuscript) in which *vpon folde* follows two or more unstressed syllable. In order to prevent a four-syllable dip, one has to emend 'vpon folde' to *on folde* (and assume monosyllabic pronunciation (as was common) of 'euer'). Another possibility would be that the original reading was in fact 'vpon' and the scribe copied it correctly, but inserted, by mistake, the intensifier 'euer'. Alternatively, one could also argue that the a-verse is authentic as it stands, and that the first stress falls, with the application of the spacing rule, on 'euer'. In this case, stress on this intensifier could perhaps be justified on semantic grounds: 'euer', together with 'fast' in the b-verse,

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[11] See 2 on pp. 305-6.

[12] See also 3.1.3 above.

[13] Stress on *flesch* might be possible, but since no other stock prepositional phrases occur without stress—which in turn suggests that their use is prompted by metrical necessity—stress on *folde* is more likely. This scansion also produces the most common rhythmic pattern x/xx/x in the b-verse.

serves to emphasise God's strong aversion to 'filth', and thereby to explain his consequent vengeance. Yet I must admit that none of these interpretations is completely satisfactory, and whichever reading one adopts, this a-verse is still problematic.

On/vpon hyȝe/hyȝt shows the same distributional features.[14] *Vpon hyȝe/hyȝt* is consistently used to create a required long dip in the b-verse (*G* 332b), or when the first a-verse stress falls on a monosyllable (*G* 48a, *C* 458a, *G* 2057a). At *G* 2057, the stress-subordination of the first open-class word 'haldez' is again indicated by the occurrence of *vpon* preceded by 'heuen' (probably monosyllabic before a following unstressed vowel). *On* occurs at *G* 1607b, *G* 2442b, *G* 67a, and *G* 1602a where *vpon* is not necessitated to satisfy the requirement of a long dip interval; and the monosyllabic form is always selected where the use of *vpon* would produce a four-syllable interval (*C* 413a, *G* 421b).

The instances of *in/vpon lond* and *on/vpon bent* are fewer,[15] but share the same distributional features. *Vpon londe* at *G* 2058a (creating a long central dip between stresses in the a-verse) can be compared with *in londe* at *P* 288b, *G* 679b (where *vpon* would create two long dips in the b-verse), and *G* 36 and *G* 486, which occur in the bob and wheel, in which alternate unstressed and stressed syllable is the norm. *In londe* is also the poet's choice at *G* 1802b, where *vpon* would lead to a four-syllable dip (though, at *C* 122b, the selection of the monosyllabic form does not seem to be metrically significant). Similarly, *on bent* at *G* 2115 is required for the iambic rhythm of the bob and wheel, and at *G* 2148b, the monosyllabic form is chosen to avoid two long dips in the b-verse. *G* 1465a and *G* 353a form a revealing pair, having an adjective + noun combination with double alliteration at a-verse opening:

As burne bolde *vpon bent*	his bugle he blowez	(*G* 1465)
Ne better bodyes *on bent*	þer baret is rered	(*G* 353)

Vpon is preceded by monosyllabic 'bolde', *on* by disyllabic 'bodyes'. These lines demonstrate that the poet creates a long dip between stresses in the crowded a-verse, where the presence or absence of a long dip between the word bearing the pre-caesural stress and the open-class word that immediately precedes plays a decisive role in determining stress assignment.

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[14] See 3 on p. 306.
[15] See 4 & 5 on pp. 306-7.

Lastly, *on/vpon lyve* also shares the same distributional features:[16] *vpon* where *on* would not provide a long dip (*G* 2095a, *G* 1719a); *on* in the bob and wheel (*G* 385, *G* 1717), and in the b-verse where *upon* would produce an unmetrical second long dip (*P* 51b); *on* or *vpon* when preceded by one unstressed syllable only (*P* 293b, *G* 1786a); but *on* where *vpon* would produce a four-syllable dip (*C* 293b).[17] At 2054a, the selection of monosyllabic *on* (rather than disyllabic *vpon*) is prompted by the fact that it is preceded immediately by disyllabic 'lady'.

One of the b-verse rules presented in Duggan's 'Metre' is that the b-verse has a minimum of four syllables and a maximum of eight.[18] He thus appears to regard as metrical a b-verse with a four-syllable dip if there is no other long dip in the b-verse. But my findings suggest that in the b-verse the poet always avoids producing a dip of more than three syllables by selecting from doublet forms. Had a b-verse with a four-syllable dip been indeed accepted as metrical, we should expect to find some examples of *vpon* used in this metrical environment. But we do not. Instead, we find only *on*. It is thus reasonable to conclude that the poet *did not* write a b-verse with a four-syllable dip.

It may perhaps be worth pointing out that *in/on erde*, which does not, as far as the Cotton Nero manuscript is concerned, have a doublet form with *vpon*, is never preceded by a monosyllabic stress-bearing open-class word. This phrase occurs 6 times in this manuscript (*G* 27a, *G* 140a, *G* 881a, *G* 2416a, *C* 601a, *C* 892b),[19] always with a long dip (either disyllabic or trisyllabic) between stresses. I can find only one instance where a pleonastic phrase, occurring in a crowded a-verse, is preceded by only a short dip after the second open-class word:

> Þe gouernour of þis gyng, Gladly I wolde
> Se þat *s*egg in sy3t and with hymself speke (*G* 225-6)

Enjambment is very rare in this poem, but when two elements of a verb phrase (here, an auxiliary and a main verb) are divided by a metrical break across a line, the main verb always bears stress:

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[16] See 6 on p. 307.
[17] Though *wonyande* might be regarded as disyllabic rather than trisyllabic.
[18] In his 'Alliterative Patterning' (78), however, he states that the b-verse can have a maximum of seven (instead eight) syllables. In 'The Z-Text' (32), Duggan states that the maximum number of syllables that the b-verse can take is nine.
[19] See 7 on p. 307.

Compast in his concience to quat þat cace myȝt
Meue oþer amount to meruayle hym þoȝt (*G* 1196-7)

For hit is grene as my goune, Sir Gawayn, ȝe maye
Þenk vpon þis ilke þrepe þer þou forth þryngez (*G* 2396-7)

Enjambment has the effect of deferring the resolution of the statement, thus giving greater force to the opening verb in the following a-verse. Therefore, stress on 'se' at *G* 226 would be regular, contextually suitable, and is in fact indicated by the short interval between 'segg' and 'siȝt', which is strong evidence that the second open-class word should be stress-subordinated to the opening 'se'. The distributional pattern of the doublets thus suggests that stock phrases at the pre-caesura position may serve not only to create a long central dip but also to indicate stress in crowded a-verses; where stress falls on the prepositional complement and the open-class word immediately preceding, there is always a long dip between the two; otherwise, the latter is stress-subordinated and absorbed into a long dip. The identical behaviour of the doublet forms in both half-lines serves as another kind of demonstration of the fact that, however crowded an a-verse is, its metrical structure roughly mirrors that of the b-verse, and is thus explicable by a two-stave theory. The second point (i.e. the metrical function of prepositional phrases in indicating stress in the crowded a-verse) needs more corroborative evidence. It is therefore necessary to see if the distributional features shared by these stock phrases also apply to prepositional phrases in general, which will be my next subject of discussion.

Prepositional phrases in this poem may be found with the following syntactic functions:[20]

(1) Postmodifier in a noun phrase:

Þe fre freke *on þe fole*	hit fayr innoghe þoȝt	(803)
And ȝe ar a lede *vpon lyue*	þat I wel louy	(2095)

(2) Adverbial:

Siþen þe sege and þe assaut	watz sesed *at Troye*	(1)
I schal fylle *vpon fyrst*	oure forwardez nouþe	(1934)

(3) Complementation of a verb or adjective:

And I wolde loke *on þat lede*	if God me let wolde	(1063)
Þe wylde watz war *of þe wyȝe*	with weppen in honde	(1586)

As the above examples suggest, prepositional phrases can play various syntactic roles. The semantic roles played by adverbials also vary: space, time, process (manner, means, etc.), respect, contingency (cause, reason, purpose, ect.), modality (emphasis, etc.), and degree. I do not intend to disregard this syntactic and semantic diversity here completely, but I want to focus more on the syllabic distributions in half-lines of the verse-terminal prepositional phrase, *on/vpon* + noun.[21]

In the lines below, a disyllabic dip between the two stresses of the b-verse is created by the inclusion of a determiner (*þe, þis, his*, etc.):[22]

A strayte cote ful streȝt	þat stek on his sides	(152)
And I schal stonde hym a strok	stif on þis flet	(294)
Let hit doun lyȝtly	lyȝt on þe naked	(423)
Þat þe bit of þe broun stel	bot on þe grounde	(426)
He sperred þe sted with þe spurez	and sprong on his way	(670)
Summe baken in bred	summe brad on þe gledez	(891)
Þenne lyst þe lady	to loke on þe knyȝt	(941)
Bot þe knyȝt craued leue	to kayre on þe morn	(1671)
Suche a sorȝe at þat syȝt	þay sete on his hede	(1721)
Mist muged on þe mor	malt on þe mountez	(2080)
And quen þe burne seȝ þe blode	blenk on þe snawe	(2315)

Where a prepositional phrase is preceded by a disyllabic stressed word, the b-verse long dip can be supplied with or without a determiner:

Watz tried for his tricherie	þe trewest on erthe	(4)
Dere dyn vpon day	daunsyng on nyȝtes	(47)

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[20] I follow the general categorization of prepositional phrases presented in Quirk et. al., *CGEL*, 657-8.

[21] The combination of *on/vpon* + pronoun is disregarded in this discussion. When it occurs, the pronoun is absorbed into a medial long dip, followed by a stressed word occupying the last stave—e.g. 'and ryȝt bifore þe hors fete þay fel *on hym* alle' (1904)—or the final stress falls on the preposition, the pronoun providing the line-terminal dip—e.g. 'bot I am proude of the prys that ȝe put on *me*' (1277).

[22] I present all the examples found in *Sir Gawain*.

On brode sylkyn borde	and bryddez on semez	(610)
Oft leudlez alone	he lengez on nyȝtez	(693)
Schon schyrer þen snawe	þat schedez on hillez	(956)
Sir Wawen her welcumed	worþy on fyrst	(1477)
As alle þe clamberande clyffes	hade clatered on hepes	(1722)
Þe leuez lancen fro þe lynde	and lyȝten on þe grounde	(526)
He dowellez þer al þat day	and dressez on þe morn	(566)
Lurkkez quyl þe daylyȝt	lemed on þe wowes	(1180)
Þis day wyth þis ilk dede	þay dryuen on þis wyse	(1468)
And his hode of þat ilke	henged on his schulder	(1930)
Þe wyȝe wynnez hym to	and wytez on his lyre	(2050)
Saue þat fayre on his fote	he foundez on þe erþe	(2229)

Vpon + noun occurs after a monosyllabic stress-bearing word. The head stave may be occupied by a disyllable, but never by a trisyllable, which would, together with *vpon*, produce a four-syllable dip:

Þe stif mon hym bifore	stod vpon hyȝt	(332)
Þenne al rypez and rotez	þat ros vpon fyrst	(528)
Schewez hym þe schyree grece	schorne vpon rybbes	(1378)
Make we mery quyl we may	and mynne vpon joye	(1681)
And thaȝ þe glyterande golde	glent vpon endez	(2039)
Þer wonez a wyȝe in þat waste	þe worst vpon erþe	(2098)
With gret bobbaunce þat burȝe	he biges vpon fyrst	(9)
Ande eft a ful huge heȝt	hit haled vpon lofte	(788)
By þat any daylyȝt	lemed vpon erþe	(1137)

It is worth emphasising that when the prepositional phrase (with *on* or *vpon*) occurs at line-ending, the b-verse always scans (x)/xx(x)/x, the most common rhythm of the b-verse in the unrhymed alliterative long line; no such b-verse has a short medial dip or a four-syllable dip between the two stresses. The line-terminal prepositional phrases thus serve to produce a metrical b-verse with a medial long dip. Their behaviour in the b-verse further suggests that they may serve to indicate stress in the crowded a-verses with three or more possible ictus positions. First, let us look at standard a-verses with

a verse-terminal prepositional phrase. All the examples found in the text have a long central dip, and there is no example of a stressed monosyllable + *on* followed immediately by its head noun, which would produce a short central dip between two a-verse stresses:

Mo ferlyes on þis folde	han fallen here oft	(23)
Þise were diȝt on þe des	and derworþly serued	(114)
On þe most on þe molde	on mesure hyghe	(137)
Þat spenet on his sparlyr	and clene spures vnder	(158)
Ther watz lokyng on lenþe	þe lude to beholde	(232)
Hit arn aboute on þis bench	bot berdlez chylder	(280)
Toward þe derrest on þe dece	he dressez þe face	(445)
And al watz rayled on red	ryche golde naylez	(603)
Hit watz hyȝe on his hede	hasped bihynde	(607)
Bi a mounte on þe morne	meryly he rydes	(740)
Abof a launde, on a lawe	loken vnder boȝez	(765)
And kneled doun on her knes	vpon þe colde erþe	(818)
And vnder fete, on þe flet	of folȝande sute	(859)
So did hit þere on þat day	þurȝ dayntés mony	(998)
Vchon to wende on his way	þat watz wyȝe stronge	(1028)
And I wolde loke on þat lede	if God me let wolde	(1063)
Vche wyȝe on his way	þer hym wel lyked	(1132)
Alle þe haþeles þat on horse	schulde helden hym after	(1692)
Saue þat fayre on his fote	he foundez on þe erþe	(2229)
He hypped ouer on hys ax	and orpedly strydez	(2232)

Many of the above examples have two long dips (opening and central), but lines 23a, 158a, 818a, 998a, 1132a, and 2232a have only one long dip, which is, as I have been arguing, a requirement for metricality in the a-verse. The stressed head noun of the prepositional phrase is always preceded by a long dip following the previous stress. At 748, the use of *on* (instead of *vpon*) would produce a verse with no long dip, which I regard as metrically not permissible:

Þe gome vpon Gryngolet	glydez hem vnder	(748)

Therefore, disyllabic *vpon* is selected for metrical reasons.

This pattern (i.e. a long central dip flanked by two stresses) remains the same in the crowded a-verse; in the lines below, the prepositional complement is an adjective + noun combination:

Dressed on þe dere des	dubbed al aboute	(75)
Sir Gauan, on Godez halue,	thaȝ hym no gomen þoȝt	(692)
Þat holde on þat on syde	þe haþel auysed	(771)
Bot þe lorde on a lyȝt horce	launces hym after	(1464)
And syþen on a stif stange	stoutly hem henges	(1614)
Leude, on Nw Ȝerez lyȝt	longe bifore pryme	(1675)
Now farez wel, on Godez half,	Gawayn þe noble	(2149)
Bot snyrt hym on þat on syde	þat seuered þe hyde	(2312)
He glent vpon Sir Gawen[23]	and gaynly he sayde	(476)
And fyched vpon fyue poyntez	þat fayld neuer	(658)
Bot styȝtel þe vpon on strok	and I schal stonde stylle	(2252)
Of bryȝt golde, vpon silk bordes[24]	barred ful ryche	(159)

Alternatively, the combination may precede the prepositional phrase and occur at verse-opening, the noun element bearing the first stress of the a-verse:

Þen grene aumayl on golde	glowande bryȝter	(236)
Ne better bodyes on bent	þer baret is rered	(353)
Hiȝe hillez on vche a halue	and holtwodez vnder	(742)
Þe fre freke on þe fole	hit fayr innoghe þoȝt	(803)
Riche red on þat on	rayled ayquere	(952)
A mensk lady on molde	mon may hir calle	(964)
Þe leue lady on lyue	luf hir bityde	(2054)
Dere dyn vpon day	daunsyng on nyȝtes	(47)
The grene knyȝt vpon grounde	grayþely hym dresses	(417)

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[23] As I shall argue in Chapter V below, the poet seems to treat title nouns such as *sir* and *whene* (e.g. 74) simply as closed-class words rather than adjectives forming an A + N combination; cf. *DT* 1122 ('Sothely, Sir kyng, ye haue saide well'), in which stress and alliteration fall on 'Sir' rather than the noun element, 'kyng'; see 5.5 below.

[24] This a-verse has both verse-opening and pre-caesural combinations. But it still retains a medial long dip.

Þer fayre fyre vpon flet	fersly brenned	(832)
Derf men vpon dece	drest of þe best	(1000)
Þe grene chapayle vpon grounde	greue yow no more	(1070)
A burne bolde vpon bent	his bugle he blowez	(1465)
Þe forme worde vpon folde	þat þe freke meled	(2373)

There is always a long dip between the noun combination element and the head noun of the prepositional phrase, on which ictus falls. Disjunction between alliteration and stress in the verse-opening combination occurs at 236, 964, 417, 1000, 1070, and 2373.

Even when the crowded a-verse involves no adjective + noun combination, it follows the same rhythmic rule of a long interval indicating that it is the second and third open-class words which are to bear stress:

Þat day doubble on þe dece	watz þe douth serued	(61)
Þat Cryst kaȝt on þe croys	as þe crede tellez	(643)
Were harder happed on þat haþel	þen on any oþer	(655)
Gawayn glyȝt on þe gome	þat godly hym gret	(842)
Sturne, stif on þe stryþþe	on stalworþ schonkez	(846)
Rudelez rennande on ropez	red golde ryngez	(857)
When Gawayn glyȝt on þat gay	þat graciously loked	(970)
Þat bigly bote on þe broun	with ful brode hedez	(1162)
In rede rudede vpon rak	rises þe sunne	(1695)
Fyndez fire vpon flet	þe freke þer-byside	(1925)
Mist muged on þe mor	malt on þe mountez	(2080)
Schyre schaterande on schorez	þer þay doun schowued	(2083)
Þenne loke a littel on þe launde	on þi lyfte honde	(2146)
Hit hade a hole on þe ende	and on ayþer syde	(2180)
Bremly broþe on a bent	þat brode watz aboute	(2233)
To fynde hys fere vpon folde	in fayth, is not eþe	(676)
Þat haldez þe heuen vpon hyȝe	and also yow alle	(2057)

All these a-verses have the alliterative pattern *(a)aa* with a long dip between the second and third open-class words, indicating that the first one is to be stress-subordinated to the following two, upon which the two stresses fall. The subordination of the first major component is similar and non-contentious when it is non-alliterating. The

following a-verses are thus annotated as *(x)aa*:

And he made a fare on þat fest	for þe frekez sake	(537)
Sette þe schaft vpon schore	and to þe scharp lened	(2332)

At 2217a, the first stress probably falls on the closed-class word, 'on', rather than 'abyde' of open class, as there is a long dip between these two:

Abyde, quoþ on on þe bonke	abouen ouer his hede	(2217)

Note, also, that the pronoun is here used in a more specific sense—i.e. 'some one (on the slope)'—and could therefore be regarded as a candidate for ictus.

There is only one example in which there is only a short dip between the head noun of the prepositional phrase and the open-class word immediately preceding:

Þe burne bode on blonk	þat on bonk houed	(785)
(MS: Þe burne bode on bonk	þat on blonk houed)	

Since in the a-verses with the syntactic frame subject + verb + adverbial stress normally falls on the verb and the head noun of the adverbial prepositional phrase with a long central dip, I suspect that the definite article *the* may be missing between 'on' and 'bonk'. This emendation seems even more likely, if one considers line 2217a that I have just quoted above. If the line is indeed authentic, however, the central 'bode' should be stress-subordinated so that the a-verse has the obligatory long central dip. The suppression of the second open-class word may also be the case at *C* 1025:

For lay þeron a *l*ump of led	and hit on loft fletez	(*C* 1025)

The absence of a long dip between 'lump' and 'led' suggests that the former should be absorbed into a long dip between 'lay' and 'led'—or that something—possibly *the*—has dropped between 'lump' and 'led'.

From all the examples above, what can we say about prepositional phrases at the pre-caesural position and such a-verses in general? I think there are at least two points to make: (1) prepositional phrases in this metrical position, though different in syntactic and semantic function, have one thing in common: to create a long dip between two stresses; (2) this spacing rule, which seems to govern the standard b-verse with a

line-terminal prepositional phrase, is also maintained in the a-verse (both standard and crowded) which involves pre-caesural prepositional phrases; this in turn suggests that such crowded a-verses have the same metrical pattern—two stresses—as standard b- and a-verses. Therefore, when there is only a short dip between a prepositional complement and the open-class word immediately preceding, it is a clear indication that the latter should be stress-subordinated to an open-class word at verse-opening, or that some unstressed element is missing.

From the foregoing discussion, I conclude that crowded a-verses with a pre-caesura prepositional phrase have a fairly fixed stress-pattern, with stress invariably falling on the noun following the preposition and a preceding open-class word (or, very rarely, a closed-class word with phrasal stress) with a long dip between. Here, I want to cite *G* 643 again:

Þat Cryst kaȝt on þe croys as þe crede tellez (*G* 643)

This a-verse is S+V+Avp, a syntactic pattern commonly observed in crowded a-verses.[25] All three open-class words are alliterating, but stress falls on the verb 'kaȝt' and the head noun of the adverbial prepositional phrase, 'croys', with subordination of 'Cryst' into the opening dip. This point becomes more significant when such a-verses include a non-alliterating open-class word just before the prepositional phrase. A case in point is at *SE* 2:

Sythen Crist suffrid on crosse and Cristendome stablyd (*SE* 2)

This a-verse has a similar syntactic (S+V+Avp) and lexical structure. The difference in verb length (monosyllabic 'kaȝt' and disyllabic 'suffrid') is adjusted by the following prepositional phrases (one with the determiner 'þe', the other without) to give both a-verses likewise a similar rhythmic structure, with a disyllabic dip between the verb and the noun following the preposition. The comparison proves the metrical function of Avp in adjusting and indicating stress, and proves above beyond doubt that 'suffrid' bears stress in *SE* 2. Therefore, it would appear certain that the following crowded a-verses with a pre-caesural prepositional phrase also have the same *(a)xa* pattern:[26]

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[25] See, for instance, lines 785, 842, 857, 970, and 2080 on pp. 131-2 above.

[26] The other instances of an a-verse with the *(a)xa* pattern are 894, 2123, and 2341, though these do not involve a pre-caesural prepositional phrase.

No hwez goud on hir **h**ede	bot þe **ha3**er stones	(*G* 1738)
He sperred þe **st**ed with þe **sp**urez	and **sp**rong on his way	(*G* 670)

The authenticity of the alliterative pattern *(a)xa/ax* serves as another piece of evidence, besides those of other non-*aa/ax* alliterative patterns like *ax/ax* (*ax/xa*) or *ab/ba* (*ab/ab*), that metrical stress does not necessarily fall on an alliterating word in the a-verse.

Duggan argues that any a-verse must have at least two full staves (i.e. a stave accompanied by both alliteration and stress), and that the *ax* (or *xa*) pattern is inauthentic. He would thus reject such patterns as *(a)xa* and *(a)ax*. My argument for the possible disjunction of stress and alliteration may appear, at least at first, to depart drastically from his position; but it is not so. As I have stated in the introduction to this thesis, I am suggesting here the absence of *metrical* stress on the stress-subordinated open-class word, which may still bear *linguistic* stress. I 'destave' an alliterating open-class word and promote, instead, a non-alliterating open-class (or, at the pre-caesura, sometimes even closed-class) word in a-verses where three stress positions could be suggested. But I argue at the same time that the stress-subordinated alliterating open-class word functions to provide the verse with compensatory alliteration, and that alliteration on the suppressed component serves to reflect and signal its semantic weight. After all, the stress-subordinated alliterating word is still present, contributing to establish the aural expectation of the *aa/ax* alliterative pattern. I agree with Duggan that the poets writing in the classical unrhymed alliterative long line share what he calls the common 'grammetrical patterns,'[27] but at the same time I suspect that alliterative (as opposed to stress) patterns could permissively become more *a matter of style* for an individual poet. This seems to me true, at least, of the *Gawain* poet.

4.2 *To* and *for to* + infinitive and their metrical functions

4.2.1 *To* and *for to* + infinitive in *Sir Gawain*

What strikes one first about the distribution of the doublet forms is the rare occurrence of *for to* + infinitive; compared with 138 occurrences of *to* + infinitive, *for to* + infinitive is found only 29 times. The former is the normal form of the poet. But

when the latter doublet is used, it almost always serves a metrical purpose.[28] The distribution of these doublets will become more significant when I discuss the a-verse rhythm later.

When *to* + infinitive occurs at line-ending, it seems always to form a long dip with a preceding unstressed syllable (an inflectional ending of the stressed word, pronominal object, etc.). *To* thus produces the metrically required long dip when the first b-verse stress is preceded by only a short dip. This pattern, ~ + to~, serves to create one of the most common b-verse rhythms (x)/xx/x. Lines of this type occur 52 times,[29] and this high frequency also suggests that *to* + infinitive serves, with sounding of inflectional *–e* for infinitive, as one of the means to create an unstressed line-ending, the practice preferred by alliterative poets in general.[30] Thus, final *–e* should perhaps be supplied where it is not represented in the manuscript spelling, as at 133, 337, 696, and 979. Line 2206b ('me, renk, to mete') apparently lacks a medial dip, but Tolkien & Gordon suspect that the line is corrupt.[31] Lines 1526 and 2204 will be metrical if the sounding of the infinitive ('ȝern') and etymological ('rawthe') *–e* can be assumed (though the spelling does not reflect this at 1526).

When the word bearing the first b-verse stress is monosyllabic and followed by no unstressed syllable, as in 'þe knyȝt for to ryse' (366b), *for to* is always used to produce an obligatory long dip. This is also the case in at 523b, 1634b, 1857b, and 2015b.[32] Alternatively, the doublet may form an initial long dip preceding the first b-verse stress, as in 1565b ('for to mwe vtter'). There is only one instance (1358b 'as fallez for to haue') where the choice of *for to* does not seem to be metrically dictated. These examples indicate that *for to* in the b-verse is nearly always a metrically constrained form, the poet being otherwise content to use *to*.

In contrast with *to* + infinitive at line-closure, when the construction occurs at b-verse-opening, the stressed verb (occupying the head stave) is always followed by a

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[27] Duggan, 'Extended A-Verses', 66.

[28] R. F. Lawrence makes a similar point about the distribution of *to* and *for to* + infinitive in b-verses of *The Wars of Alexander*, and argues that the doublet forms are exploited to create a disyllabic dip between two b-verse stresses; but he examines only the medial and line-terminal dips, and thus failed to see the metrical importance of the b-verse opening dip; see his 'Formula and Rhythm in *The Wars of Alexander*.' Duggan also points out the exploitation of *for to* by alliterative poets to write a metrical b-verse; see his 'Final *–e*', 130 and 'Libertine Scribes and Maidenly Editors: Meditations on Textual Criticism and Metrics', *English Historical Metrics*, eds. C. B. McColley and J. J. Anderson (Cambridge, 1997), 226.

[29] See 1 on p. 308.

[30] See, for example, Duggan, 'Final *–e*', 141; he argues, however, that the feminine ending was not necessarily a condition of metricality. For the opposite view, see Putter and Stokes, 'Spelling', 77-96.

[31] See note to 2205 ff. on page 126 of their edition.

[32] See 2 on p. 309.

long dip (mostly disyllabic). Such instances are observed in 29 lines.[33] This is another indication that the poet makes a careful choice between the doublets, avoiding the double long dips which *for to* in these cases would produce in the b-verse. The inflectional *–e* is sometimes spelled and sometimes not. But considering that all the examples would, without sounding of inflectional *–e*, produce the most common b-verse rhythm (x)/xx/x, it is more likely that the infinitive *–e* occurring in these verses is not sounded. Interestingly, it is always *to* (not *for to*) + infinitive that occurs at b-verse opening, except for a single instance at 1565b ('for to mwe vtter') above. Also, *to* at this position always forms a short dip, again, except in a single case (2099b 'and to strike louies'), where the opening long dip is necessitated by the absence of a medial long dip. That means that *to* + infinitive at b-verse opening functions as a set syntactic frame by which the poet can achieve one type of metrical b-verse with a medial long dip. Since the evidence is that the inflectional *–e* is consistently sounded at line-ending, it is plainly a metrical rather than normative inflection, which can also be exploited within a line if the metre requires. There are 8 such cases,[34] where the sounding of *–e* will bring the rhythms of these verses, again, to the most common pattern (x)/xx/x. Since the occasional sounding of *–e* on metrical grounds is well attested in *Pearl*,[35] it is reasonable to think that the poet might exploit this licence.

The distribution of *to* and *for to* + infinitive in the b-verse suggests: (1) that the latter is a marked form, and (2) that when the poet does use it, it is almost always to create a metrically required long dip.

To and *for to* + infinitives are exploited in the same way in the a-verse. They occur in 72 lines in total, 50 of which involve *to* + infinitive. Again, the dominant form is *to* + infinitive, at both the verse-opening (22 times[36]) and pre-caesural position (28 times[37]). There are two points to make regarding the distribution of *to* + infinitive in the a-verse. Firstly, *to* + infinitive at the pre-caesura position serves, again, always to produce a long—disyllabic—central dip between two stresses, as in 213a ('as wel schapen to schere') and 1823a ('I have none yow to norne'). There are five examples which have an interval of three or more syllables between stresses.[38] At 1067a, *to falle* evidently acts as a long central dip—

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[33] See 3 on p. 310.
[34] See 4 on p. 311.
[35] Putter and Stokes, 'Spelling', 86-7.
[36] See 5 on pp. 311-2.
[37] See 6 on pp. 312-3.
[38] i.e. 984, 1309, 1512, 2246, 2436.

And me als fayn to falle feye as fayly of myyn ernde (1067)

—with the open-class word 'falle' (despite alliteration) being stress-subordinated to 'feye' ('stricken by death'), with which 'falle' forms a verb phrase ('falle feye'). Secondly, when the a-verse is a *crowded* one, it is *always* 'to' that occurs at verse-opening (with no instance of *for to*) in this text, as in 549a ('To sech þe gome of þe grene').[39] This might reflect the poet's intention to avoid a syllabically heavy verse-opening dip into which an open-class word must fall; *for to* occurs at verse-opening *only* in standard a-verses, as in 1973a ('For to ferk þurȝ þe fryth').

For to + infinitive occurs at verse-opening 15 times,[40] where it provides an extra long dip.

The most significant findings regarding the behaviour of *to* and *for to* + infinitive can be obtained from the instances of *for to* + infinitive at the pre-caesural position.[41] As I have already pointed out, *to* + infinitive at the pre-caesura position is always accompanied by a long central dip.[42] Therefore, when the preceding stressed word is monosyllabic, as 'tor' in 165a ('Þat were to tor for to telle') and 'lyst' in 1111a ('And þat yow lyst for to layke'), the poet uses *for to* instead of *to* in order to ensure this long dip. Such instances are very rare (only 8 times compared with 28 times of *to* + infinitive), but nonetheless of great significance, because they suggest that *for to* is dictated by metrical requirements; *for to* can produce the long central dip and thus fulfil the rhythmic expectations strongly associated with the syntactic pattern involving *to* + infinitive at the pre-caesura position.[43] The use of *for to* is thus a clear indication that the two metrical stresses *must* fall on the main constituents immediately preceding and following *for to*. This seems very obvious when the verse contains only two open-class words (i.e. is a standard verse). In the *crowded* a-verse, however, this simple fact becomes a decisive factor determining which open-class word is to be subordinated. There are only two such instances in *Sir Gawain*:

Founded for ferde *for to* fle in fourme þat þou tellez (2130)
Wayued his berde *for to* wayte quo-so wolde ryse (306)

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[39] See 5b on p. 312.
[40] See 7 on p. 313.
[41] See 8 on pp. 313-4.
[42] The long central dip, especially in crowded a-verses, functions as a 'rhythmic marker' for the ear to resolve the questions of stress placement in the first half of the verse and signal the verse-end.
[43] At 262a (Preue *for to* play with [OF. *preve* and *privé*]), *for to* seems to be chosen to produce a long central dip in an a-verse which would otherwise have no long dip either before or after the first stress (and therefore would be unmetrical by my rule).

The use of *for to* suggests that the poet intends these crowded a-verses to be read with the two stresses falling on 'ferde' and 'fle' at 2130 and 'berde' and 'wayte' at 306; if not for metrical reasons, then there would be no point using this doublet here, which has exactly the same syntactic and semantic function as *to*. These a-verses can therefore be annotated as *(a)aa* and *(a)xa* respectively. Stress on the non-alliterating 'berde' with consequent subordination of the alliterating 'Wayued' in line 306a is indeed convincing evidence that stress and alliteration do not necessarily coincide in this poem.

4.2.2 *To* and *for to* + infinitive in *Cleanness* and *Patience*

In this section, I will study the behaviour of the doublet forms *to/for to* in the other two Cotton Nero poems. As was the case with *Sir Gawain*, *to* is the normal form of the poet; while *to* occurs in 115 lines in *Cleanness* (6.35%) and 41 in *Patience* (7.72%), *for to* does so only in 15 lines in the former (0.83%) and 8 in the latter (1.51%).

In the b-verse, line-terminal *to* + infinitive occurs 44 times in *Cleanness*[44] and 13 times in *Patience*.[45] Assuming the sounding of etymological *–e* at 1017 ('vnblyþë to neȝe') and 1256 ('þer balë to suffer'), a long medial dip occurs in all the b-verses listed with a single exception at *C* 143 ('for þyn vnhap to neȝe'). *For to* is not needed to provide a long dip, and would produce an unmetrical verse at *C* 143 (two long dips) and *C* 148 ('þi erigaut to prayse': four-syllable dip). The examples from *Patience* show, again, that *for to* is not required to provide a long dip, assuming the sounding of grammatical and etymological *–es* (as indicated). A long medial dip occurs in all the b-verses except *P* 55b.

A b-verse with verse-opening *to* + infinitive occurs 35 times in *Cleanness*[46] and 11 times in *Patience*.[47] In *Cleanness*, *for to* would render most of the b-verses listed unmetrical by producing two long dips. *C* 1489b ('to wast no serges') should be emended to 'to waste no serges', with final *–e* sounded, to provide the verse with the required long dip. Assuming the sounding of infinitive *–e* at *P* 14 ('to holdë for ever') and 192 ('to slepë so faste'), *for to* would here also produce an unmetrical b-verse with two long dips.

Let us turn to instances of *for to* + infinitive in the b-verse. The following are

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[44] See 1a on p. 314.
[45] See 1b on p. 315.
[46] See 2a on p. 316.

b-verses with line-terminal *for to* + infinitive in *Cleanness* (6 instances) and *Patience* (3 instances):

Ful manerly with marchal	mad *for to* sitte[48]	(*C* 91)
I schal fette yow a fatte	your fette *for to* wasche	(*C* 802)
And his men amonestes	mete *for to* dyȝt[49]	(*C* 818)
Blusched byhynden her bak	þat bale *for to* herkken	(*C* 980)
Wyth þe best of his burnes	a blench *for to* make	(*C* 1202)
Scoleres skelten þeratte	þe skyl *for to* fynde	(*C* 1554)
Þis is a mervayl message	a man *for to* preche	(*P* 81)
Hade no maȝt in þat mere	no man *for to* greve	(*P* 112)
So bayn wer þay boþe two	his bone *for to* wyrk	(*P* 136)

As the above examples show, the line-terminal *for to* serves as a medial long dip in b-verses which would otherwise have no long dip. *For to* is almost always preceded by a monosyllabic stress-bearing word (e.g. 'mad', 'blench', 'man', etc.), or one which sounding of etymological *–e* could render disyllabic (e.g. 'mete' and 'bale'); but *for to* is never preceded by more than one unstressed syllable. Thus, the potential four-syllable dip, as in *Sir Gawain*, is constantly avoided in these poems.

A-verses with *for to* + infinitive are only occasionally observed; *Cleanness* has 6 instances of verse-opening *for to* + infinitive, and *Patience* 5 instances:

For to save me þe sede	of alle ser kyndes	(*C* 336)
For to ende alle at oneȝ	and for ever twynne	(*C* 402)
For to mynne on his mon	his meth þat abydeȝ	(*C* 436)
For to tent hym with tale	and teche hym þe gate	(*C* 676)
For to mele wyth such a mayster	as myȝteȝ hatȝ alle	(*C* 748)
For to compas and kest	to haf hem clene wroȝt	(*C* 1455)
For to towe hym into Tarce	as tyd as þay myȝt	(*P* 100)

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[47] See 2b on p. 317.

[48] Although Anderson hyphenates *for to* (*for-to*) in his edition of *Cleanness*, it is here, for the sake of consistency, spelled as two separate words.

[49] The line-terminal 'dyȝt' should be emended to 'dyȝte' with infinitive *–e*; this is also the case in *C* 201 ('...to weng'), 663 ('...to work'), 821 ('...to dyspyt'), 860 ('...to chast'), 1734 ('...to heng'), and *P* 136 ('...for to wyrk'), 157 ('...to kest').

For to layte mo ledes	and hem to lote bryng	(*P* 180)
For to wayte on þat won	what schulde worþe after	(*P* 436)
For to go at þi gre	me gaynez non oþer	(*P* 348)
For to schylde fro þe schene	oþer any schade keste	(*P* 440)

The use of *to* (not *for to*) would render the above a-verses (except *C* 748) x/xx/(x), a rhythm most commonly observed in the b-verse. Therefore, *for to* may perhaps additionally serve to produce a frequently-found a-verse rhythm with two long dips (i.e. verse-opening and verse-central), thus distinguishing the a-verse rhythm from that of the b-verse. A-verses with pre-caesural *for to* + infinitive are found only in *Cleanness*:

Þer was moon *for to* make	when meschef was cnowen	(373)
And hade a wyf *for to* welde	a worþelych quene	(1351)
Now is sette *for to* serve	Satanas þe blake	(1449)

For to is employed, again, to create a long dip between the two alliterative stresses where *to*, preceded by a monosyllabic stress-bearing word, would produce only a short dip. *Patience* has no instance of the pre-caesural *for to* + infinitive.

A-verses with pre-caesural *to* + infinitive are observed in 18 lines in *Cleanness*[50] and in 11 lines in *Patience*.[51] *For to* is not needed in these lines to provide a long dip between the stresses.

Verse-opening *to* + infinitive occurs 19 times in *Cleanness*[52] and 7 times in *Patience*.[53] *To* (not *for to*) is *always* selected when the a-verse has a crowded construction; see *C* 400, 948, 1257, 1589, 1600, and 1804. In six cases (*C* 239, 1168, 1358, 1371, 1733, 1750), the use of *to* gives these a-verses the b-verse rhythm, and therefore the poet's attempt to avoid the b-verse rhythm in the a-verse is a 'tendency', but not a 'rule', which would render such a-verses unmetrical. More interestingly, at *C* 239a and 1733a, where the sounding of infinitive *–e* is not metrically required, the suppression of such *e*s will produce two half-lines with the identical rhythm (x/xx/x). If this is indeed the case, that is, if a- and b-verses can have the same rhythmic structure, it serves as proof against Cable's view that the rhythms of the two half-lines *must* be mutually exclusive.[54] This comes to seem even more likely when one finds lines like *P*

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[50] See 3a on p. 317.
[51] See 3b on p. 318.
[52] See 4a on p. 318.
[53] See 4b on p. 319.
[54] Cable, *The English Alliterative Tradition*, 86.

58:

To sette hym to sewrté unsounde he hym feches (58)

This line serves as strong proof of the possibility of two half-lines with identical rhythm.

4.2.3 *To/for to* + infinitive in *The Destruction of Troy*

I have argued that doublet forms such as *to/for to* + infinitive and *on/vpon* are exploited by the *Gawain* poet to create a long dip.[55] Exploitation of the doublets for metrical purposes is also true of *DT*, which is syllabically shorter-lined than most of the other alliterative poems, and this feature makes even more obvious the use of the doublets to achieve a regular disyllabic interval between the two stresses. First let us look at b-verses where *to/for to* occurs as a medial dip. As in *Sir Gawain*, *to* + infinitive is the norm: there are 45 such lines in the first 1008 lines, while *for to* occurs only in 11 lines. *To* is consistently preceded or followed by another unstressed syllable to form a medial long dip:[56]

He translated it into latyn	for likyng *to* here	(*DT* 71)
Meuyt ouer the mounteyns	men *to* beholde	(*DT* 816)

When the preceding stressed word is monosyllabic, and when single *to* would not provide a long dip, *for to* is the poet's choice:[57]

And wysshe me with wyt	þis werke *for to* end	(*DT* 4)
And past furth prudly	his pray *for to* wyn	(*DT* 857)

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[55] The poet's exploitation of the doublet forms for metrical purposes is also demonstrated by the fact that he uses *for to* in the bob and wheels only when he needs an extra syllable in order to produce a regular iambic line. *For to* occurs only 4 times in the bob and wheels, and *all* instances serve this metrical purpose; 'This auenture for to frayn' (489), 'his mode for to remwe' (1475), 'his feez ther for to fonge' (1622), 'his seruantez for to saue' (2139). The use of the auxiliary *con* as an equivalent of past tense also serves the same purpose in iambic lines, as demonstrated by Stokes and Putter in their article on the metre of the Cotton Nero poems ('Spelling', 78-9).

[56] Other instances are 2, 127, 128, 136, 151, 155, 166, 181, 257, 314, 318, 327,330, 334, 356, 390, 437, 458,482, 512, 516, 517, 529, 531, 545, 607, 629, 656, 717, 737, 742, 779, 780, 813, 826, 843, 846, 877, 906, 933, 943, 970, 986.

[57] See also 165, 230, 272, 475, 484, 541, 547, 795, 802.

Thus selection from the doublet forms in the b-verse is determined by the need for a long dip. The same is more or less true of the a-verse. There are 47 instances of *to* + infinitive at pre-caesural position, and such a-verses always have a long interval (normally disyllabic) between stresses:[58]

On lusti *to* lok	with lightnes of wille	(*DT* 15)
Thy selfe *to* be sene	and in suche fame	(*DT* 219)

That selection from the doublet forms is based entirely on the syllabic length of the preceding stress-bearing word (or the presence or absence of an unstressed opening syllable in the following word) is obvious from the distributional patterns of 'to telle' and 'for to telle':

Of his trifuls *to* telle	I haue no tome nowe	(*DT* 43)
Now of Troy *for to* telle	is myn entent euyn	(*DT* 27)
But þe truth *for to* telle	and þe text euyn	(*DT* 51)
I haue no tome *for to* telle	ne tary no lengur	(*DT* 307)

The above examples are strong proof of a rule/convention of a long central dip in the a-verse involving pre-caesural *to*/*for to* + infinitive. *For to* + infinitive occurs as a long central dip in 31 a-verses in *DT*, in 10 of which the use of *to* would result in a standard a-verse which has no long dip either before or after the first stress, a type of verse which I consider as unmetrical:

Sum tru *for to* traist	triet in þe ende	(*DT* 17)
With sight *for to* serche	of hom þat suet after	(*DT* 24)
The truthe *for to* telle	Tetyde she heght	(*DT* 106)
Unstithe *for to* stire	or stightill the Realme	(*DT* 117)
Halfe *for to* haue	and hold for þi name	(*DT* 245)
In sound *for to* saile home	and your sute all	(*DT* 546)
In dede *for to* do	as I desyre wille	(*DT* 549)
The flese *for to* fecche	and ferke it away	(*DT* 614)

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[58] Other examples are 20, 43, 184, 207, 243, 246, 260, 261, 271, 332, 338, 340, 379, 384, 405, 441, 460, 463, 511, 526, 582, 597, 602, 606, 627, 643, 650, 651, 653, 655, 704, 705, 712, 720, 730, 761, 801, 818, 828, 832, 871, 891, 962, 995, 1007.

As wyfe *for to* wede	in worship and Joye	(*DT* 635)
The flese *for to* fonge	and no fay worthe	(*DT* 956)

In 18 instances, the a-verse has an opening long dip as well as a central one:[59]

And þe way *for to* wylne	with wilful desyre	(*DT* 203)
Þe may be glad *for to* get	such a good name	(*DT* 237)
Hadyn wyn *for to* wale	and wordes ynow	(*DT* 373)

The consistent use of the disyllabic form in this metrical environment suggests that the presence of one long dip either before or after the first stress is, as in the b-verse, the metrical condition of the a-verse, and that any a-verse involving *to*/ *for to* + infinitive at the pre-caesural position must have a long central dip between the two metrical stresses. There are only three instances in which a long dip would occur even if *to* were used:

Bowes *for to* beire	in the bare winttur	(*DT* 412)
That wilnes *for to* wyn	this wethur of gold	(*DT* 539)
My deuer *for to* do	and my deth voide	(*DT* 764)

But note that the first stress is preceded by only one or no syllable. It may be that *for to* is used to add an extra syllable in what would otherwise be a short (four or five-syllable) a-verse. From all the evidence above, it is now clear that, as was the case with his adjective + noun combinations, the *DT*-poet's handling of the doublets is based entirely on metrical considerations, and that a-verses involving *to*/*for to* + infinitive at pre-caesural position always have, just as those of *Sir Gawain* do, a long central dip, which is in *DT* flanked always by two alliterating stresses. It may be worth pointing out that *to*/*for to* + infinitive at this position occurs far more frequently in *DT* (47/31 instances in 1008 lines: 4.66/3.08%) than in *Sir Gawain*, which has 27 instances of *to* and only 4 of *for to* in 2025 lines (1.33/0.20%). The high figure in *DT* suggests that the *DT* poet tends to repeat the same syntactic patterns to produce a regular disyllabic (or trisyllabic) interval between stresses, just as he tends to repeat the same collocations to achieve the second alliterative stress.[60]

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[59] Other instances are 377, 386, 396, 550, 592, 604, 608, 659, 717, 745, 800, 833.

[60] For his 'mechanical' handling of A + N combination, see pp. 93-4 above and pp. 213-6 below.

4.3 *–Ly* and *–lych(e* adverbs and adectives, and present participle *–and(e*

4.3.1 Adverbs with *–ly*, *-lyly*, and *–lych(e*

The endings derived from OE *–lice* (for adverbs) and OE *–lic* (for adjectives) can appear, in this manuscript, as *–ly* or *–lych(e*. Among the most obvious examples are *lufly/luflych(e* and *comly/comlych(e*. *–ly* is predominantly the form with which adverbs and adjectives appear in this manuscript, whereas *-lych(e* is used very sparingly. The selection from these variant forms appears to be made, at least at first glance, in an arbitrary fashion. And, since it has been generally agreed that *–ly*/*–lych(e*, whether or not the latter is spelled with final *–e*, had become, by the late Middle English period, monosyllabic,[61] little importance has been attached to the variant suffixes—e.g. *–ly*, *–lych(e*, and (in the case of adverbs) *–lyly*—with consequent failure to recognise their possible metrical significance in alliterative metre. This is clearly the case with studies on adverbs conducted by such scholars as Thomas Cable, Karl Hagen, and H. N. Duggan.[62] Although many of their observations are convincing, none of the critics makes, as I do, a clear distinction between the variant forms of *–ly* and *–lych(e*, for they treat them together under the one category of '*-ly* adverbs'.[63] And, as *–lych(e* adverbs occur far less frequently than *–ly* adverbs, the focus of their discussion remains mostly on adverbs in the *–ly* form and its potential disyllabic pronunciation (i.e. *–lyë*). However, as their studies are valuable in many other ways, I will first summarise their views with regard to the syllabic status of final *–e* on '*–ly* adverbs' (i.e. adverbs in *–ly*/*-li*, *–lich*/*–lych*, or *-lyly*).

Cable has made the startling assertion that not only the final *–e* of *–ly* (i.e. *–lyë* or *–lychë*) but also any other historically motivated *–es* were syllabic in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Middle English alliterative verse.[64] He gives, as the proof of the

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[61] Most historical linguists agree that in the poet's dialect final *–e* had ceased to be pronounced by about the middle of the fourteenth century; see J. Wright and E. M. Wright, *An Elementary Middle English Grammar*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1928), 70-2; F. Mossé, *A Handbook of Middle English*, tras. J. A. Walker (Baltimore, 1952), 35; Mustanoja, *A Middle English Syntax*, 95, 275, 314; R. Jordan, *Handbook of Middle English Grammar: Phonology*, trans. and revised E. J. Crook, Janua Linguarum, Series Practica 218 (The Hague, 1974), secs. 138, 141.

[62] Cable, *The English Alliterative Tradition*, 66-84; K. T. Hagen, 'Adverbial Distribution in Middle English Alliterative Verse', *Modern Philology* 90 (1992), 159-71; Duggan, 'The Role and Distribution of *–ly* Adverbs in Middle English Alliterative Verse', *Loyal Letters: Studies on Mediaeval Alliterative Poetry and Prose*, eds L. A. J. R. Houwen and A. A. MacDonald (Groningen, 1994), 131-54.

[63] Hagen does suggest, at one point, the possibility of disyllabic pronunciation of *–lych(e*, saying that this form may indicate 'a conscious awareness that a more conservative pronunciation is required' (170).

[64] Cable, 78.

retention of such *–es*, the complete absence of *–ly* adverbs from the line-ending position in his corpus, which consists of 6,100 lines taken from *Cleanness*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Piers Plowman*, *Morte Arthure*, *The Parlement of the Thre Ages*, *William of Palerne*, *Alexander A*, and *The Wars of Alexander*.[65] He argues that, since the b-verse can have only a short dip after the line-final stress, disyllabic pronunciation of *–ly* must have been the reason for the absence of *–ly* adverbs from that position. Cable does not, as Duggan points out,[66] specify what portions of these poems were studied for his metrical analysis, and for this reason his statistics are not completely reliable. Nevertheless, his finding of the unequal distribution of *–ly* adverbs in the alliterative long line raises an important question regarding the syllabic status of final *–e* on *–ly* adverbs.[67]

Karl Hagen, in his analysis of the distribution of *–ly* adverbs (again, those in *–ly* and in other variant forms specified above) and flat adverbs (or final *–e* adverbs, in his term) in the long line, argues that their distribution is strongly influenced by the disyllabic status that *-ly* had in the past, and that its etymological disyllabic pronunciation consequently affects the word order of verb phrases and the alliterative patterning as well. He appears to share with Duggan the view that etymological disyllabic pronunciation of *–ly* is probably the explanation for its absence from the line-final position, but adopts an agnostic position with regard to the syllabic quality of final *–e* in *–ly* adverbs at the time when the extant alliterative poems were composed. His study is a valuable one, as it throws some light on the correlation between the distribution of *–ly* and *–e* adverbs, and the syntax, rhythm, and alliterative patterning of the long line. Yet, the significance of his argument lies, I think, in his recognition of the possibility that variant adverbial suffixes were handled differently by individual poets.[68] He perceptively remarks—though only tentatively—that the spelling *–lych(e* might, in some cases, indicate disyllabic pronunciation.[69]

Cable's assertion that every historically justified *–e* was sounded in Middle English

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[65] *Op. cit.*, 68, 75-6. Cable excludes *The Destruction of Troy* from his corpus: '*The Destruction of Troy* [is] an exception despite, or because of, its apparent regularity'.

[66] Duggan, 'The Role and Distribution of *–ly* Adverbs', 138, n. 17.

[67] Cf. 'There is compelling evidence that *–ly* adverbs generally retained a trisyllabic form in Middle English. One piece of evidence is that they are strictly avoided at the end of the line. What, then, was required at the end of the line to account for their absence?' (Cable, 'Old and Middle English Prosody: Transformations of the Model' in *Hermeneutics and Medieval Culture*, ed. P. J. Gallacher and H. Damico (Albany, N.Y., 1989), 205).

[68] 'Another complicating factor is the possibility that each poet, differing in dialect and in his conception of his poetry's relationship to the past, might handle issues of archaic phonology and formulaic phrasing uniquely' (171).

[69] Hagen, 170.

alliterative verse meets strong objection, especially from Duggan, who conducted a study of b-verses in his much larger corpus consisting of 28,282 alliterative long lines taken from one rhymed and sixteen unrhymed alliterative poems.[70] In the entire corpus, he found 62 b-verses that would require sounding of *–e* after *–ly*, *-li*, *-lich*, or *-lych* for metricality, 32 (51%) of the 62 b-verses occurring in the work of two scribes—the works of the *Gawain* poet (19 instances) and *Alexander A* (13 instances)[71]—while finding no such verses in *Death and Liffe*, *Parlement of the Thre Ages*, *Saint Ekenwald*, *The Siege of Jerusalem*, *The Destruction of Troy*, or *Wynnere and Wastoure*, and only three in *The Wars of Alexander* and nine in the *Morte Arthure*, both of which survive in more than one manuscript. He argues that many of these problematic b-verses are 'apparent exceptions to rule', since they have 'adverbs with common forms in which *svarabhakti* vowels are attested in the *MED*'; he thus treats such adverbs as 'sweteliche' at *WPal* 1329b ('...and sweteliche heled')[72] and 'grysliche' at *PP Crede* 585b ('...grysliche gloseþ') as trisyllabic with sounding of the *svarabhakti* vowel (and *not* the final *–e* in '-liche'), even when the medial vowel is *not* (as in 'grysliche') represented in the spelling. Besides, as he regards statistics taken from texts surviving only in a single manuscript as unreliable, the substantial minority of b-verses attested in *Sir Gawain* and *Alexander A* that require sounding of *–e* appear to be disregarded in his analysis.[73] To reinforce his argument for the complete loss of final *–e* on *–ly*, Duggan draws on evidence from Langland: only four verses in the 17,721 lines of the three versions appear to require a sounded *–e* on '*–ly* adverbs' (again those in *–ly* and in other variant forms);[74] in addition, he found a small number of lines which in fact end with '*–ly* adverbs',[75] though no such lines are attested in any other alliterative poems (including the Cotton Nero poems), except for a single instance at *Death and Liffe* 375b ('and buffetted him rightlye').[76] These findings led him to the conclusion that his study of all three versions of the poem 'provides no support for the notion that Langland ever sounded *–e* on *–ly* adverbs'. It is important to emphasise, however, that, although

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[70] For full details of his corpus, see 'The Role and Distribution', 144.

[71] He lists verses in the work of the two scribes that he regards as defective: *Cleanness* 244, 270, 310, 698, 945, 1045, 1749; *Patience* 193, 337; *SG* 509, 578, 648, 832, 882, 1004, 1117, 1183, 1559, 2461; *A* 64, 82, 129, 293, 297, 341, 346, 375, 458, 520, 581, 586, 693.

[72] *WPal* represents *William of Palerne*, and *PP Crede Piers the Ploughman's Crede*.

[73] 'It is easy enough to turn to the works of, say, the *Gawain*-poet and find verses like *C* 310 *clanlych planed* or *SGGK* 1183 *and dernly vpon*, but there is every reason to think such verses simple error...' ('Final *–e*', 138-9, n. 49).

[74] Duggan, 'The Role and Distribution of *–ly* Adverbs', 144, n. 29.

[75] 'The final proof, if more were required, for the loss of *–e* on *-ly* adverbs in Langland's dialect is his stylistically peculiar tendency to end a line with such an adverb. Other alliterative poets almost never did that' (Duggan, 'Langland's Dialect and Final *–e*' 180).

[76] Duggan, 'The Role and Distribution of *–Ly* Adverbs', 139.

Langland may well have written several b-verses ending with '*–ly* adverbs', this cosmopolitan poet, who wrote his poem in a different dialect, with a different set of rhythmic and alliterative rules from those of other alliterative poets writing in the North and Northwest Midlands, should be treated separately from the rest of the poets, and the findings based on his lines may therefore not necessarily be true of more northerly poets such as the *Gawain* poet.

Duggan also examines the rhymes in Chaucer (in over 7,000 lines) and Gower (in 3,530 lines) to see whether or not a *–ly* adverb[77] can rhyme with /i:ə/. Finding no such instance, he argues that *–ly* suffixes were no longer disyllabic by the middle of the fourteenth century even in the conservative southerly London dialect. He concludes that sounded *–e* on *–ly* adverbs would have been impossible for poems composed in the North and Northwest Midlands and only possible but not probable in poems like *Piers Plowman* written in a Southwest dialect as conservative as Chaucer's London dialect.[78] Accordingly, he accounts for the absence of *–ly* adverbs at line-closure by resorting to the etymological disyllabic status of *–ly*, arguing that the establishment of the syntactic and metrical patterns of alliterative verse preceded the loss of syllabic *–e* on *–ly*.[79]

Thus, none of the above critics—Cable, Hagen, or Duggan—seems to make as clear a distinction between *–ly* and *–lych(e* as I do here. Neither do they raise the point that there are not only adverbs in *–ly* and *–lych(e* but also adjectives in those forms; and, as I shall demonstrate, these variant adjectival suffixes, too, have a similarly distinctive distributional pattern in the long line. One must notice that the doublet forms, *–ly* and *–lych(e*, have at least one obvious difference: *-ly* is an open syllable, whereas *–lych*, with suppression of final *–e*, is a closed syllable. This difference becomes very important when a word following the adverb or adjective in *–ly* or *–lych(e* begins with an unstressed vowel (e.g. 'The lorde *luflych* aloft', *SG* 981a): in such a case, the use of *–lych(e* (and not *–ly*) serves to prevent either hiatus or elision with the following vowel, and thereby to retain a long dip between 'luf-' and '-loft', on which metrical ictus, with the application of the spacing rule, falls. This is one of the ways in which the *Gawain* poet exploits the variant forms. As is the case with other doublet forms such as *to/for*

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[77] Here, Duggan treats *only* adverbs in *–ly*, thus disregarding those in *–lych(e*; but he seems to be using the findings from Chaucer and Gower to support his argument that *–e* on *any –ly* adverb (whether in *–ly* or *–lych(e)* was not sounded in the North and Northwest Midlands.

[78] Duggan, 'The Role and Distribution', 152.

[79] Duggan, 'The Role and Distribution', 153. Cf.: 'those other alliterative poets [except Langland] did not end *b* verses with *–ly* adverbs, probably because they would have been unmetrical at the time the syntactic frames of the form were fixed. When final *–e* was regularly pronounced on such adverbs, they would have been unsuited for the final position in the verse with their two final unstressed syllables' (Duggan, 'Langland's Dialect and Final *–e*', 181).

to + infinitive and *on/upon fold*, the *Gawain* poet takes advantage of the doublet forms, *–ly*, *-lych(e*, and *–lyly* (for adverbs), to satisfy various metrical requirements. Especially pertinent is the fact that, as is the case with *for to* + infinitive, *-lych(e* is a *marked* form; this, in turn, suggests that his usage of *–lych(e* may be prompted by metrical exigencies.

Sir Gawain has many instances of the adverb 'lovely', which, in this text, occurs variably as *lufly*, *luflyly*, or *luf(e)lych*. At first glance, the distribution of these variant forms seems arbitrary, but a careful study of their behaviour and that of other adverbs reveals that the selection from the variant forms is, in many cases, determined by metrical requirements. The poet employs disyllabic *lufly* where *–ly* is followed by an unstressed syllable beginning with a consonant, and where, consequently, a metrically significant long dip will result. For instance:

To vnlace þis bor	**lufly** bigynnez	(*SG* 1606)

Similarly, *lufly* occurs in the following crowded a-verses:

Lachez **lufly** his leue	at lordez and ladyez	(*SG* 595)
Þe lorde **lufly** her by	lent, as I trowe	(*SG* 1002)

In each case, the adverb is followed by an unstressed monosyllable ('his', 'her') with an initial 'h'. Elision does not seem to occur between *-ly* and *h*/vowel monosyllables of closed class, as it would obscure the sense. Thus, the spacing rule dictates the first stress on the adverb, followed by a long dip before 'leue' and 'by', which bear the pre-caesural stress. However, elision does seem to occur when *–ly* occurs before non-monosyllabic open-class word which begins with unstressed *h* or vowel, as in:

Wolde lyke if a ladde com	**lyþerly** attyred	(*C* 36)
Hit watȝ, not for a halyday	**honestly** arayed	(*C* 134)

Note that the adverbs are both trisyllabic, used to maintain—despite elision between '–ly' and 'a-'—a metrically required long dip. Hiatus is thus normally avoided by the use of trisyllabic adverbs, but there are two instances (*SG* 888b and *P*110, which I will discuss later) in which hiatus must be assumed to satisfy an obligatory long dip.

When the word bearing the second a-verse stress has an unstressed vowel as its initial syllable (e.g. 'adoun' and 'aloft' below), it is always the *–lych* adverb (e.g. 'luflych'

below) that occurs in this position. It is worth emphasising that *lufly never* occurs in this manuscript in this metrical environment. There are four instances of *luflych* in *Sir Gawain*, and all are in crowded verses (no instance is attested in *Cleanness* or *Patience*):

Liȝt **luflych adoun**	and lenge, I þe praye	(*SG* 254)
Þe lorde **luflych aloft**	lepez ful ofte	(*SG* 981)
Loutez **luflych adoun**	and þe leude kyssez	(*SG* 1306)
He lyȝtes **luflych adoun**	leuez his corsour	(*SG* 1583)

As I have argued in Chapter II, in a crowded a-verse with three possible ictus positions (which are most typically occupied by two open-class words preceding one open- (or closed-) class word on which the pre-caesural stress falls), the stress assignment is determined by the length of a dip between the word bearing the pre-caesural stress and the second open-class word: if there is a long dip between them, the first a-verse ictus must fall on the second open-class word, stress-subordinating the first; if there is only a short or no dip, the second open-class word is then stress-subordinated to the first one, on which ictus consequently falls. The significant point about the above examples is that *–lych* with its closed syllable (or *–lyche* with the final *–e* elided with the following vowel) serves to prevent elision between *–ly* and the following vowel, which would result in a short central dip instead of a long one. As I have already demonstrated elsewhere,[80] and as the above examples also demonstrate, in crowded a-verses involving a disyllabic (or, very rarely, trisyllabic) non-derivative adverb at the pre-caesural position (e.g. *þerto*, *þerat*, *togeder*, etc.), ictus always falls on the second syllable of the disyllabic/trisyllabic adverb and the immediately preceding open-class word (i.e. 'luflych' in the above cases). 'Luflych', therefore, preserves the disyllabic interval that indicates that stress does so fall in these lines—providing further evidence of the spacing rule operating in the crowded a-verses, where the long dip functions to mark the ictus positions.

In the following b-verse, the choice of disyllabic *-lyly* is prompted by similar metrical considerations:

Laȝen loude þerat	and **luflyly acorden**	(*SG* 2514)

Here, disyllabic *–lyly* serves to give the b-verse its required long dip, which, given

elision between '–ly' and 'ac-', would not be possible with *lufly*.

The poet's purposeful handling of *–ly* and *–lych(e* doublets can also be observed in *dryȝly/dryȝlych*. *–ly* is the poet's normal choice (except one instance of flat 'dreȝ' at *SG* 2263 below), as in the following examples from *Cleanness* and *Sir Gawain*:

And hade dedayn of þat dede	ful **dryȝly** he carpeȝ	(*C* 74)
Þenn con Dryȝttyn hym dele	**dryȝly** þyse wordes	(*C* 344)
Dreȝly alle alonge day	þat dorst neuer lyȝt	(*C* 476)
Daunsed ful **dreȝly**	wyth dere carolez	(*SG* 1026)
Hade hit dryuen adoun	as **dreȝ** as he atled[81]	(*SG* 2263)

However, the only instance of *dryȝlych* in this manuscript occurs, again, in a crowded a-verse, in which a disyllabic adverb at the pre-caesural position has an unstressed vowel as its initial syllable:

Þat drof hem **dryȝlych adoun**	þe depe to serve	(*P* 235)

This also testifies to the poet's careful selection from the variant forms: *-lych* serves to ensure a long central dip between the *–lych* adverb and the second syllable of 'adoun', on which the pre-caesural stress falls.

Sir Gawain has one more instance (besides those listed above) of *luflych*; but here, it is spelled with a medial vowel *–e* which might indicate a glide vowel pronunciation:

Þenne þay **louelych** leȝten	leue at þe last	(*SG* 1410)

I shall return to the issue of the metrical (in)significance of the glide vowel later in my discussion.[82] Here, it suffices to say that the cited line is the only instance of this adverb spelled with a medial *–e* in *Sir Gawain*, *Cleanness*, and *Patience*.

At *SG* 2389, *–lyly* is selected to create the obligatory long dip in the b-verse:[83]

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[80] See pp. 51-3 above.

[81] Here, the metre does not neccesitate disyllabic 'dreȝly' (as there is a long medial dip without it), as opposed to *C* 74b and *C* 344b, in which '-ly' is part of the required long dip.

[82] See pp. 153-5 below.

[83] Duggan also points out the use of disyllabic *–lyly* as a means to achieve metricality in the b-verse ('Final *–e*', 131). In his 'Role and Distribution' (147), he regards instances of the *–lyly* form in the b-verse as strong support for his argument that the suffix *–ly* had ceased to be disyllabic by the time the extant alliterative poems were written. Importantly, he points out that outside *Sir Gawain*, *–lyly* used for

Þenn loȝe þat oþer leude and **luflyly** sayde (*SG* 2389)

In the other two instances, however, the disyllabic ending *–lyly* does not seem to be metrically significant:

And he **luflyly** hit hym laft and lyfte vp his honde (*SG* 369)
Liȝtez doun **luflyly** and at a lynde tachez (*SG* 2176)

Cleanness has two instances of *luflyly*, neither of which is metrically relevant:

Laþeȝ hem alle **luflyly** to lenge at my fest (*C* 81)
For alle arn laþed **luflyly** þe luþer and þe better (*C* 163)

As these examples and those above show, *-lyly* does not always have metrical significance. However, *–lych*, except for 'louelych' at *SG* 1410, seems always to be prompted by the poet's need to avoid elision with a following vowel, which would produce a short dip where a long one is metrically required.

Let us now have a look at other adverbs in *–lych(e*, and see if the general assumption that *–lych(e* (as well as *–ly*) was no longer disyllabic in the late Middle English period can also be true of the works of the *Gawain* poet. For adverbial 'seemly', *semly* is the normal form of the poet. Examples from *Sir Gawain* are:

Þat sete on hym **semly** wyth saylande skyrtez (*SG* 865)
Such semblaunt to þat segge **semly** ho made (*SG* 1658)
Sykande ho sweȝe doun and **semly** hym kyssed (*SG* 1796)

At *C* 1442, the last-stave word begins with an unstressed vowel:

Bi þe syde of þe sale were **semely arayed** (*C* 1442)

Here, *–ly* rather than *–lych(e* may be explained by the sounding of a medial vowel indicated by the spelling 'semely'—which, in the three Cotton Nero poems, is spelled

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this purpose rarely occurs in the other poems of his corpus (see n. 37 on p. 131); the fact that *–lyly* is used more or less uniquely by the *Gawain* poet suggests that it is also possible that the poet treats the suffix *–lych(e* in a different way from other alliterative poets.

thus only here. The b-verse thus still acquires, despite elision between '–ly' and 'a-', its obligatory long dip. There are only two instances which do not comply with the distributional patterns of *–ly* and *–lych*. The first one is 'semly' in the following example:

Seggez hym serued **semly innoȝe** (*SG* 888)

The original may well have been *semlyche* or *semely* with a medial vowel. If the verse is authorial, however, hiatus must take place to produce the medial long dip required for metricality.

When the adverb is immediately followed by a disyllabic word with stress on its first syllable, the long dip may be achieved by disyllabic *–lyly*, as in *SG* 622:

Þat bisemed þe segge **semlyly** fayre (*SG* 622)

In *SG* 882—about two hundred lines on from the above cited line—the b-verse has a similar syntactic structure (adverb + adverb/adjective with monosyllabic stem). Interestingly enough, it is *–lych* (and not *–lyly*) that is selected at this position:

And he sete in þat settel **semlych** ryche (*SG* 882)

This is the only instance of *semlych* in the three Cotton Nero poems, but it could be a significant one. If *–lych* is assumed to be monosyllabic, the b-verse is unmetrical, lacking a long dip. But if the poet *always* treated *–lych(e* as monosyllabic, it is strange that he chose to use *semlych*, a rare variant form, only once—where the metre requires a long dip; he could have used *semlyly*, of course, which he actually did use just two hundred lines before. It seems more likely, therefore, that the poet treated *–lych(e* as disyllabic in this metrical environment—i.e. when a trisyllabic adverb is required to ensure the obligatory long dip. The original may well have been *semlyche* with etymological *–e*, dropped in the process of scribal transcription. This hypothesis comes to seem more probable when we look at *SG* 648, in which *–lych* is actually spelled with final *–e*:[84]

At þis cause þe kny3t **comlyche hade** (*SG* 648)

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[84] Elision would not take place between *–lyche* and stressed *h-*; contrast *SG* 1581b 'kachande his blonk', in which the unstressed *h-* triggers elision with the preceding schwa.

This is the only instance of *comlych(e* in the Cotton Nero poems, and elsewhere the poet uses either *comly* or *comlyly*. *Sir Gawain* has the examples:

Þay **comly** bykennen	to Kryst ayþer oþer	(*SG* 1307)
Þat oþer kny3t ful **comly**	comended his dedez	(*SG* 1629)
Kysse me now **comly**	and I schal cach heþen	(*SG* 1794)
And if I carp not **comlyly**	let alle þis cort rych	(*SG* 360)
He kysses hir **comlyly**	and kny3tly he melez	(*SG* 974)
Kysten ful **comlyly**	and ka3ten her leue	(*SG* 1118)
And kysses hym as **comlyly**	as he couþe awyse	(*SG* 1389)

Since the trisyllabic *comlyly* is an option, the poet could have used *comlyly* in line 648 above, where, a trisyllabic adverb is required. Particularly interesting is *comly* at *C* 312, where the presence of an unstressed syllable ('with-') allows the use of monosyllabic *–ly*:

And thenne cleme hit with clay	**comly** withinne	(*C* 312)

Sir Gawain has three other instances (besides *semlych* at 882) of adverbs in *–lych* without final *–e*, and all three share the syntactic ('-lych' adverb + verb) and rhythmic (adverb preceded by one unstressed syllable and followed by a stressed syllable) structure—and are unmetrical as they stand:

Bryddez busken to bylde	and **bremlych** syngen	(*SG* 509)
Queme quyssewes þen	þat **coyntlych** closed	(*SG* 578)
With glopnyng of þat ilke gome	þat **gostlych** speked	(*SG* 2461)

It is worth emphasising that the adverbs could have taken the much more frequently found *–ly* forms (*bremly*, *coyntly*, *gostly*) if *–lych* was assumed by the poet to be monosyllabic. Equally importantly, *–lych* occurs in the b-verse only when it is *immediately* followed by a disyllabic word with stress on its first syllable, or by a trisyllabic word beginning with an unstressed vowel—though no such instance is attested in the Cotton Nero poems—as in:

Garneschit one the grene felde and **graythelyche** arayede (*MA* 722)[85]

In other words, *-lych(e* occurs *only* where metre requires a trisyllabic adverb to give the obligatory long medial dip. For when *–ly* adverbs occur in such b-verses, they, too, are always trisyllabic, if one assumes sounding of an etymological medial /e/:

And þenne eueleȝ on erþe	**ernestly** grewen	(*C* 277)
In þe compas of a cubit	**kyndely** sware	(*C* 319)
Wolde lyke if a ladde com	**lyþerly** attyred	(*C* 36)
Hit watȝ not for a halyday	**honestly** arayed	(*C* 134)

Considering that *–ly* adverbs occurring in this metrical environment are always trisyllabic, it is highly likely that adverbs in *–lych(e* are also intended to be trisyllabic. With the sounding of the etymological *–e* assumed, the b-verses in question will become perfectly metrical.

The hypothesis that final *–e* in adverbial *–lych(e* was sounded where the metre required a trisyllabic adverb, and where elision does not take place is supported by the instances of the adverb *clanly(ch* in the Cotton Nero poems. There are five instances of adverb *clanly(ch* in *Cleanness* (264, 310, 1089, 1327, 1621) and one instance (*clanly*) in *Sir Gawain* (393) (and no instance in *Patience*), and all except *C* 310 have *clanly*. The *–ly* form occurs three times in the a-verse:

And ȝif **clanly** he þenne com	ful cortays þerafter	(*C* 1089)
Þat he ful **clanly** bicnv	his carp bi þe laste	(*C* 1327)
Clanly al þe couenaunt	þat I þe kynge asked	(*SG* 393)

and twice in the b-verse:

And kepe to hit and alle hit cors	**clanly** fulfylle	(*C* 264)
When he com bifore þe kyng	and **clanly** had halsed	(*C* 1621)

Note that *–ly* in both cases is followed by another unstressed syllable, which with *–ly* forms the metrically required long dip. Interestingly, the only instance of *–lych* occurs at the same position (i.e. the head stave in the b-verse), in a syntactic structure similar to

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[85] Contrast the *–ly* selected when followed by an *unstressed monosyllable*, as in 'and graythely hyme hittez' (*MA* 1369b) and 'graythely to wyrche' (*MA* 1384b).

that of the two examples just cited (an adverb followed by a verb/verb phrase or participle):

A cofer closed of tres **clanlych** planed (*C* 310)

If *–lych* were monosyllabic, this b-verse would be unmetrical, lacking a long dip. Considering the fact that *comlyche* with a spelled *–e* is attested in the Cotton Nero poems, however, it is more likely that the original reading was *clanlyche*, with the etymological *–e* sounded; if *–lych* had been understood as monosyllabic, the poet would most naturally have used *clanly*, as he did in all the other instances; there would have been no point in using *–lych* only in this particular instance, producing an unmetrical b-verse. Moreover, the fact that *clanly* spelled to suggest a glide vowel (i.e. *clanely*) never occurs in the Cotton Nero poems and very rarely elsewhere (e.g. 'clenely' does not occur in *WW*, *SE*, *DT*, *MA*, except for a single instance in *WA*) does not prove, but strongly suggests, that final *–e* in *clanlych* was sounded where the metre required a triysllabic adverb.[86]

Having so far argued for consistent disyllabic pronunciation of *–lych(e* (where elision does not take place), it may be worth pointing out here that the spelling *–lych* itself may well have represented two possible—monosyllabic and disyllabic—pronunciations; or, that may at least have been the assumption that the scribe(s) may have had. One word or suffix representing two variant pronunciations can be compared to doublet forms conveying the same meaning (e.g. *oþer/or*, *siþen/sin*). In one of his articles, Duggan discusses how doublet forms such as *to/for to* and *clyne/incline* are exploited by alliterative poets to achieve metricality in the b-verse. In this informative study, he also points out that some irregularities in b-verses are 'no more than apparent', and that 'the scribal spellings occasionally suggest additional unstressed syllables in both inflectional endings and derivational affixes which much have been long before syncopated in the poets' dialects'.[87] Yet, he nowhere suggests, in the way I do here, the possibility of one orthographic representation (i.e. word, suffix, etc.) having *doublet*

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[86] Duggan appears to treat this line as inauthentic: 'there is every reason to think such verses ('clanlych planed' *C* 310 and 'and dernly vpon' *SGGK* 1183) simple error...one might be tempted to argue, as Cable does, that Old English adverbial *-līce* remained dissyllabic even in the fourteenth century, but there is no evidence that would support that notion and a great deal that counters it in foot-counted poetry"; see his 'Final –e', 138-9, n. 49.

[87] Duggan, 'The Shape of the B-Verse', 591; for instance, in *WA* 388 '...sal be callid here-eftire' (alliterating on /k/), Duggan thinks that the disyllabic 'callid', though this is a usual form in the Ashmole manuscript (occurring 24 times), is concealing a metrically correct monosyllabic 'cald', which he says appears as both past participle and preterite.

pronunciations (e.g. *or* alone representing monosyllabic *or*/disyllabic *oþer*) which the scribe(s) might well have taken for granted in copying the texts.

Sir Gawain has three instances of *fe(e)rsly* ('fiercely'), two of which are non-problematic:

Þen **feersly** þat oþer freke	vpon fote lyghtis	(*SG* 329)
Þenne **fersly** þay flokked in	folk at þe laste	(*SG* 1323)

The disyllabic adverb occurs again in line 832b, but this second half-line is unmetrical as it stands, lacking the obligatory long dip:

Þer fayre fyre vpon flet	**fersly** brenned	(*SG* 832)

Interestingly, 'fersly' here is an emendation from *ferfly*, which Tolkien and Gordon comment is 'apparently corrected' by the scribe of the manuscript.[88] The scribe miswrote the word, and his inattention at this point makes it more probable that the form was originally *ferslych(e*. In fact, in *Patience*, the poet uses *–lych* at the same position in the b-verse, in a similar syntactic environment:

Thenne oure Fader to þe fysch	**ferslych** biddez	(*P* 337)

Again, 'ferslych' should be emended to *ferslyche* to provide the b-verse with a medial long dip—or should be assumed to represent a pronunciation with final schwa. In the case of *SG* 832, it is also possible that the original was *ferslyly* with an extra *–ly*—though no instance of *ferslyly* is attested in the manuscript.

Another interesting example is *derfly/deruely* (<ON. *djarfliga*), variant forms with or without a non-etymological medial vowel:

And he **deruely** at his dome	dyȝt hit bylyue	(*C* 632)
How þat doȝty, dredles	**deruely** þer stondez	(*SG* 2334)
Derfly þenne Danyel	deles þyse wordes	(*C* 1641)

The presence or absence of a medial vowel is not metrically significant in the above examples, but in *P* 110, the form without a medial vowel renders the verse unmetrical:

Þat þe daunger of dryȝten so **derfly** ascaped (*P* 110)

As I have mentioned earlier, the b-verse here and line *SG* 888b ('semly innoȝe') are the only instances in which a disyllabic *–ly* adverb is followed by a non-monosyllabic open-class word with an unstressed vowel as its initial syllable, and where, consequently, hiatus must be assumed to ensure the metrically required long dip; otherwise, either trisyllabic *derflyche* or *deruely* (with a pronounced medial /e/) may have been used by the poet to counter or compensate for elision and the consequent loss of a medial long dip. However, there is little evidence to indicate which was the case. It is true, as Duggan points out, that many *–ly(ch* adverbs with a monosyllabic stem have variant forms with a glide vowel, which can render them trisyllabic without the sounding of final *–e*. But the fact remains that at *P* 193, for instance, *serely* instead of 'serelych' could have been used, if a medial vowel was a metrical option:

Sone haf þay her sortes sette and **serelych** deled (*P* 193)

Cleanness also has three instances of adverbs in *–lych*, and two of them—'derelych' (<OE. *dēorlīce*) and 'onelych' (<OE. *ænlīce*)—involve a glide vowel, which is also indicated by the spelling:

How þe deȝter of þe douþe wern **derelych** fayre (*C* 270)
Heȝest of alle oþer saf **onelych** tweyne (*C* 1749)

Again, these adverbs could have taken the *–ly* ending—thus *derely* or *onely*—if the medial vowel could be sounded, and would have provided the b-verses with the metrically required long dip. The other instance of *–lych* occurs at *C* 18:

And honeste in his housholde and **hagherlych** serued (*C* 18)

This is the single instance in which a *–lych* adverb occurring at this position has an *etymological* medial *–e*, which must be pronounced.[89]

Adverbs in *–lych(e never* occur at verse-opening in crowded a-verses; the adverb in ths position is always absorbed into an opening (long) dip before the stress-bearing verb

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[88] See note to line 832 on p. 23 of their edition.
[89] Disyllabic pronunciation of *–lych(e* could be needed only if one takes the medial vowel to be suppressed before the liquid 'r'; see also n. 9 on p. 121 above.

as in:[90]

Loude laȝed he þerat	so lef hit hym þoȝt	(*SG* 909)
And *blyþely* broȝt to his bedde	to be at his rest	(*SG* 1990)

Only a flat adverb or a *–ly* adverb can occur in crowded a-verses with this syntactic structure. There are eight other instances in *Sir Gawain*,[91] but none of them has a *–lych* adverb. The poem has 26 instances of verb + derivative adverb at verse-opening, as in:

And henged *heȝe* ouer his hede	in hard iisse-ikkles	(*SG* 732)
He lyftes *lyȝtly* his lome	and let hit doun fayre	(*SG* 2309)

Adverbs with either *–e* or *–ly* are invariably selected, except three instances of *–lych* already mentioned above (e.g. 254a 'Liȝt luflych adoun', 1306a, 1583a), in which *–lych* is selected to prevent elision between '–ly' and the following vowel 'a-', and so ensure the long dip which indicates the two ictuses.

Similarly, there are three instances of stress-subordinated derivative adverb + *-ed* participle at verse-opening, none of which involves an adverb in *–lych*:

Were *harder* happed on þat haþel	þen on any oþer	(*SG* 655)
And *fayre* furred withinne	with fellez of þe best	(*SG* 880)
And *fayre* furred withinne	wyth fayre pelures	(*SG* 2029)

From the examples discussed, it is apparent that adverbs in *–lych* occur in crowded a-verses only for metrical reasons, and never occur in the prehead; in other words, when they occur, they *always* bear metrical ictus and insure a succeeding long dip.

There are only two instances of *–lych* in the standard a-verse, both of which occur in *Sir Gawain*:

Now schal we **semlych** se	sleȝtez of þewez	(*SG* 916)
Þenne þay **louelych** leȝten	leue at þe last	(*SG* 1410)

The metre does not, in either case, require *–lych* to be disyllabic, since the standard

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[90] See 3.2.3 above for verb + derivative adverb combinations.
[91] 328, 331, 418, 1162, 1684, 1863, 1877, 2034.

a-verse, unlike the crowded one, can have its obligatory long dip either before or after the first stress. It cannot be confidently argued how much—if there is any—metrical significance *–lych(e* had in the standard a-verse. However, since *-lych(e* is a *marked* form, it is likely that this rare form, when it occurs, is prompted by some 'reasons'—metrical or/and syntactic. It is also worth emphasising that the more usual *–ly* forms, *semly* and *louely*, are remarkable by their absence. If *–lych* is selected elsewhere only where a trisyllabic form is required, it is highly likely that 'semlych' and 'louelych' in the lines above were also trisyllabic, with an etymological *–e* sounded and, in the case of 'louelych', no pronounced medial *–e*; the a-verses in question would then have the disyllabic interval between the two a-verse stresses which is, as J. Turville-Petre convincingly argues, the 'standard' rhythm.[92]

Here is a summary of the foregoing discussion:

1) The suffix *–lych(e* for adverbs is a marked form, as opposed to *–ly*, which is unmarked;
2) *–lych(e* occurs 11 times in the b-verse, serving, *always*, to achieve the obligatory long dip; in other words, *-lych(e* occurs in the b-verse *only* when the metre requires a trisyllabic adverb to avoid the (x)/x/x rhythm;
3) Out of the 11 b-verses, 4 have a *–lych(e* adverb spelled with a medial vowel, which is part of the stem *only* at *C* 18b ('hagherlych') and therefore must be pronounced (this is the *only* instance in the Cotton Nero poems of a *–lych(e* adverb spelled with an etymological /e/).
4) *–lych(e* occurs 7 times in the a-verse (5 times in the crowded a-verse, 2 in the standard one); *-lych(e* occurs in the crowded a-verse *only* when it is required to prevent possible elision and thus ensure the long central dip which indicates ictus positions in the crowded a-verse; *-lych(e* appears to be serving, in the standard a-verse, to create the 'standard' or, what I call, *preferred* rhythm of a disyllabic interval between the two a-verse stresses; of these two standard a-verses, one (*SG* 1410a) has a *–lych(e* spelled with a medial vowel ('louelych'), which is not etymological.

The spelled *non*-etymological medial vowel in *–lych(e* adverbs might represent a glide vowel which developed during the Middle English period; but, since the *–lych(e* suffix is a marked form and occurs only where the metre requires or prefers, it is more likely that the non-etymological medial vowel in the spelling is merely

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[92] J. Turville-Petre, 316.

graphical and has no syllabic value. Thus, the above observations strongly suggest that *–lych(e* following a *monosyllabic* stem (or a disyllabic one with predictable suppression of medial vowel) was the disyllabic alternative to *–ly*, used *only* where the metre required or preferred.

4.3.2 Adjectives in *–ly* and *–lych(e*

A close study of the behaviour of *–ly*/*–lych(e* adjectives in the alliterative long line reveals that *–lych(e* adjectives have a distributional pattern quite distinct from those in *–ly*: *–lych(e* adjectives occur only under certain syntactic and metrical conditions. It also demonstrates that the suffix *–lych(e* was a disyllabic one, at least in the Cotton Nero poems, and used as such *only* when metre required or preferred.[93]

The pair *lofly*/*luflych(e* forms a convenient start. *Lufly* seems to be the poet's choice when it forms a pre-caesural adjective + noun combination. There are two instances in this manuscript:

La3t to his **lufly** hed	and lyft hit vp sone	(*SG* 433)
To loke on oure **lofly** lorde	late bitydes	(*C* 1804)

Here, ictus falls on the alliterating adjective (i.e. 'lufly', 'lofly') and on the open-class verb at verse-opening ('la3t', 'loke'). A disyllabic *–lych(e* in an adjective + noun combination would have obscured the ictus positions: *his luflych(e hed* (instead of 'his lufly hed') and *our luflych(e lorde* (instead of 'our lofly lorde') would no longer be able to form a metrical one-stave 'compound', because disyllabic pronunciation of *–lych(e–* with sounding of a grammatically justified *–e* (as a weak adjective following a possessive)—creates a long dip, which indicates ictus on both the adjective and the following noun. There are only a very few possible instances in the Cotton Nero poems of a crowded a-verse in which an adjective-noun phrase at the pre-caesural position may occupy two separate staves, the trisyllabic adjective acting to subordinate the open-class word at verse-opening (e.g. *SG* 1819a 'Þat bere blusschande bemez',[94] *C* 1282a 'And pyled þat precious place'[95])—unless the verse-opening word constitutes

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[93] F. Mossé notes that *–lich*, together with other suffixes, *-fast*, *-ful*, and *–les*, was disyllabic in weak and plural adjectives, but he does not quote examples; see sec. 74 in *A Handbook of Middle English*.

[94] The sounding of final *–e* on *–and(e* is more likely here than its suppression; for a discussion on this a-verse, see 4.3.3 'Present Participle *–and(e*' below.

[95] It is also possible to treat 'precious' as a disyllabic adjective; then the a-verse will fit the regular

with the following adjective-noun phrase, what I call, a 'compound'-noun phrase (e.g. 'Þe olde auncian wyf' *SG* 1001a[96]), where ictus falls, with the application of the spacing rule, on the second adjective ('auncian') and the noun ('wyf') with a long dip between.[97]

In standard a-verses (where a long dip must always be achieved either before or after the first stress), the poet's usual choice is the monosyllabic suffix *–ly*, especially when the adjective is predicative or postmodifies a noun. Two such instances occur in *Sir Gawain* (no instances are attested in *Patience* or *Cleanness*):

Lowande and **lufly**	alle his lymmez vnder	(*SG* 868)
Bot wolde ȝe, lady **louely**	þen leue me grante	(*SG* 1218)

The instances here involve standard a-verses, but there are two occasions (one in *Sir Gawain*, and the other in *Cleanness*) on which *–lych* (and not *–ly*) is selected in the b-verse:

His legez lapped in stel	with **luflych** greuez	(*SG* 575)
Loth laþed so longe	wyth **luflych** wordeȝ	(*C* 809)

The b-verses above are both unmetrical as they stand, lacking a metrically required long dip. It is significant that the form *–lych* is chosen when the metre in fact requires a trisyllable. It is probable that *–lych* here represents or is an error for disyllabic *–lychë*. Interestingly enough, 'luflych' in both instances occurs in the same syntactic environment (with + 'luflych' + plural noun), in which the sounding of final *–e* is grammatically justified. In fact, such grammatically justified *–e* is spelled at *C* 939:[98]

Þo wern Loth and his lef	his **luflyche** deȝter	(*C* 939)

This b-verse has almost the identical syntactic (his + 'luflyche' + plural noun) and

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pattern, ictus falling on 'pyled' and the first syllable of 'precious' with a long dip between.

[96] See 3.1.5 above for the 'compound'-noun phrases in *Sir Gawain*.

[97] In *SG* 520 ('To bide a blysful blusch of þe bryȝt sunne), and *SG* 560 ('To dryȝe a delful dynt and dele no more'), however, J. Turville-Petre takes the adjective + noun combinations to occupy two separate staves, subordinating the verbs at verse-opening (J. Turville-Petre, 326): with the application of the spacing rule, however, ictus falls, in both cases, on the verb ('bide', 'dryȝe') and the noun ('blusch', 'dynt'), subordinating the adjective ('blysful', 'delful').

[98] Cf. *SG* 958 'Chymbled ouer hir blake chyn with chalkquyte vayles', where the disyllabic adjective, 'chalkquyte', occurs with a grammatically motivated *–e*, and the sounding of the *–e* provides a metrically required long dip ('chalk-' is an emendation from MS *mylk—*).

rhythmic (adjective preceded by one unstressed syllable and followed by a stressed syllable) structure as those above. With the sounding of spelled/unspelled final *–e*, the b-verse here and those above become perfectly metrical. These examples suggest that it is highly likely that, in adjectives, too, the suffix *–lych(e* was used only as a metrically motivated disyllabic alternative to *–ly*.

The probability of disyllabic pronunciation of *–lych(e* is also suggested by *semly/semlych*. *Semly* is the normal choice of the poet, as demonstrated in the a-verses below, where the adjective is, as with *lufly* above, either predicative or used as a noun, and where a trisyllabic form is not required by the metre:

Forþy so **semly** to see	syþen wern none	(*C* 262)
And þay wer **semly** and swete	and swyþe wel arayed	(*C* 816)
To se þat **semly** in sete	and his swete face	(*C* 1055)
To samen wyth þo **semly**	þe solace is better	(*C* 870)
For me þink hit not **semly**	as hit is soþ knawen	(*SG* 348)
Al þat seȝ þat **semly**	syked in hert	(*SG* 672)

Semly can also occur predicatively in the b-verse if metre does not require a disyllabic suffix:

He seȝ noȝt bot hymself	how **semly** he were	(*C* 209)
Bot ȝet he sayde in hymself,	More **semly** hit were	(*SG* 1198)

Note that *–ly* is followed, in both cases, by another unstressed syllable that ensures the b-verse long dip. *Semly* can also occur as a qualifying adjective, as in the following lines from *Sir Gawain* and *Cleanness* (no instance occurring in *Patience*) respectively:

When þat **semly** syre	soȝt fro þo wonez	(*SG* 685)
Moni **semly** syre soun	and swyþe rych maydenes	(*C* 1299)

The examples here and those above show that the *–ly* form occurs in different grammatical functions, and is always, in the Cotton Nero poems, spelled as *semly*, a form suggesting no medial vowel. There is only one instance (*C* 1247) in which *–lych* is selected:

Þay slowen of swettest	**semlych** burdes	(*C* 1247)

Again, this b-verse is unmetrical as it stands, lacking an obligatory long dip. It is worth emphasising again that there would have been no point in using *–lych* only here in this particular instance, if that suffix, too, was invariably monosyllabic. As was the case with 'luflych' in *SG* 575 ('with luflych greuez') and *C* 809 ('wyth luflych wordes') above, *–lych* here occurs as a qualifying adjective, and where the sounding of final *–e* is both grammatically justified (in this case, too, a plural adjective) *and* required by the metre to provide the b-verse with its long medial dip. Again, the poet has selected the *–lych(e* form only where the metre requires the suffix to be disyllabic.

The same distributional pattern is also observed in *comly/comlych. Comly* is the normal choice, whether as noun or as adjective, predicative or qualifying, as in the following instances (none occurring in *Patience*):

Carande for þat **comly,**	Bi Kryst, hit is scaþe	(*SG* 674)
Bot quen þat **comly** com	he keuered his wyttes	(*SG* 1755)
Þat watȝ **comly** and clene	God kepeȝ non oþer	(*C* 508)
By how **comly** a kest	he watȝ clos þere	(*C*1070)
Into a **cumly** closet	coyntly ho entrez	(*SG* 934)
Into þe **comly** castel	þer þe knyȝt bidez	(*SG* 1366)
Withinne þe **comly** cortynes	on þe colde morne	(*SG* 1732)
And in **comly** quoyntis	to com to his feste	(*C* 54)
Of vche clene **comly** kynde	enclose seven makeȝ	(*C* 334)
In **comly** comfort ful clos	and cortays wordeȝ	(*C* 512)

There are three instances (all from *Sir Gawain*) in which *comlych* occurs, all in the b-verse, all b-verses being, again, unmetrical as they stand:

Knyȝtez ful cortays	and **comlych** ladies	(*SG* 539)
And couertorez ful curious	with **comlych** panez	(*SG* 855)
And comaundez me to þat cortays	your **comlych** fere	(*SG* 2411)

Again, these b-verses involve a qualifying adjective and will become metrical with the sounding of grammatically justified *–e* (for a plural or a weak adjective). This is also the case at *C* 265:

And þenne founden þay fylthe in **fleschlych** dede3 (*C* 265)

From the examples discussed so far, it is beyond doubt that the *–lych* form was selected for the b-verse because it could take a sounded inflectional *–e* and so be disyllabic when the metre necessitated. At *C* 49, *-lych* is monosyllabic and must be (in order to exclude an unmetrical second long dip in the b-verse):

And if vnwelcum he were to a **worþlych** prynce (*C* 49)

The sounding of final *–e* here is not justified nor indicated in the spelling and would render the b-verse unmetrical. Similarly, at *C* 1351, the sounding of final *–e* would not be grammatically justifiable, since the adjective is strong:

And hade a wyf for to welde a **worþelych** quene (*C* 1351)

As the metre requires the adjective to be trisyllabic, the medial vowel (indicated here by the spelling) must be sounded. Since incorrectly inflected forms thus do not figure, it suggests that the poet understood the rules governing inflectional *–es*, even though these were fast disappearing from his own dialect.

In the following lines, a non-etymological medial vowel—i.e. 'worþelych' (< OE. *weorþlic*), 'broþelych' (< ON. *bráðr*), and 'loþelych' (< OE. *lāþlic*)—occurs where the sounding of a final *–e* on *–lych* could be grammatically justified:

Al welwed and wasted	þo **worþelych** leves	(*P* 475)
Of þe brych þat vpbrayde3	þose **broþelych** worde3	(*C* 848)
In lust and in lecherye	and **loþelych** werkkes	(*C* 1350)

It is possible that, since all the *–lych(e* adjectives attested in the texts (except for one instance of '-lyche' at *C* 939b on p. 161 above) appear without a final *–e*, such *–es* were consistently disregarded by the scribe; or, as the spelling suggests, a glide vowel before liquid might well have developed. However, as *–lych(e* is a *marked* form, its occurrence is more likely to be prompted by metrical requirements; that is, *–lych*, whether or not accompanied by a spelled inflectional *–e*, was always taken to be disyllabic in this particular environment (i.e. where the metre requires an extra unstressed syllable, and also where the sounding of final *–e* is justified), while any

*un*etymological medial vowel in the spelling was not pronounced. However, when monosyllabic *–ly* occurs with a medial vowel, as in

With wele and wyth worschyp þe **worþely** peple (*C* 651)

the medial vowel must have syllabic value, though it is possible that the scribe substituted *–ly* for *–lyche*. This is unlikely, however, considering that he is normally content to retain the suffix *–lych* itself, though he might, in some cases, be responsible for deleting final *–e* which might be present in the original for metrical reasons, either not appreciating its metrical significance or assuming that *–lych* could represent disyllabic pronunciation.

I have been arguing for disyllabic *–lych(e* in the b-verse, and this hypothesis is most strongly supported by *comlych* and *semlych*, two *–lych(e* adjectives which, in the Cotton Nero poems, are always spelled without a medial vowel. Yet, it is worth emphasising, too, that *–lych(e* is disyllabic only where it is grammatically justifiable, and where it is not, metre confirms a monosyllable.

It is now necessary to examine whether the same is also true of *–lych(e* adjectives in the a-verse. As was the case with *–lych(e* adverbs in the a-verse, it is difficult to determine whether or not the final *–e* of *–lych(e* adjectives could here too have syllabic value, since most of the a-verses involving a *–lych(e* adjective have a metrically required long dip either before or after the first stress regardless of the monosyllabic or disyllabic pronunciation of *–lych(e*. For instance:

To þe **comlych** quene wyth cortays speche (*SG* 469)
In his **comlych** courte þat kyng is of blysse (*C* 546)

Since *comlych* here occurs as a weak adjective, the sounding of final *–e* is possible in both cases, but difficult to prove, because these a-verses have a long dip at verse-opening, with which the metrical condition for the a-verse can satisfactorily be met. But it would produce the 'standard'—or, as I call it, *preferred*—rhythm of a disyllabic interval between the two a-verse stresses. And at *SG* 1886, the sounding of final *–e*—though not indicated by the spelling—is actually required to satisfy the a-verse metrical rules:

With **comlych** caroles and alle kynnes ioye (*SG* 1886)

It is possible but unlikely that the second ictus falls (following the French pronunciation) on the second syllable of 'caroles' rather than the first one, thereby creating a metrically required long dip. It is worth pointing out that *comlych* occurs only 6 times (3 in the b-verse, 3 the a-verse) out of 16 instances of the adjective in the Cotton Nero poems, and that in each case the sounding of final *–e*—as here—is grammatically justified. In addition, no variant forms with a medial vowel (e.g. *comely/comelych*) are attested. Considering these points, it is more likely that *comlych* represents trisyllabic pronunciation with a final *–e*, and that the above a-verse is perfectly metrical and has a standard alliterative pattern.

From the foregoing discussion, it is thus probable that *–lych* in the a-verse, too, was, if inflected, a disyllabic alternative to *–ly* when the required or *preferred* metre necessitated or desiderated. As in the b-verse, final *–e* was almost certainly pronounced in the a-verse when *–lych* adjectives with a *monosyllabic stem* (i.e. those involving no etymological medial vowel or non-etymological glide vowel indicated in the spelling) were either weak or plural; on this assumption, the a-verses involving such adjectives would have the standard or preferred rhythm, though they are not actually unmetrical as they stand. The other examples from the Cotton Nero poems of a weak or plural adjective in *–lych* without a medial vowel are as follows:

Whyle oure **luflych** lede	lys in his bedde	(*SG* 1469)
And euer oure **luflych** kny3t	þe lady bisyde	(*SG* 1657)
And oþer **louflych** ly3t	þat lemed ful fayre	(*C* 1486)
Þat for her **lodlych** layke3	alosed þay were	(*C* 274)
Into þat **lodlych** lo3e	þay luche hym sone	(*P* 230)
And alle þe **godlych** gere	þat hym gayn schulde	(*SG* 584)
Þenne þe **godlych** God	gef hym onsware	(*C* 753)
Þat wyth his **hi3lich** here	þat of his hed reches	(*SG* 183)
To þis **frelych** feste	þat fele arn to called	(*C* 162)
Bot if my **gaynlych** God	such gref to me wolde	(*P* 83)

As was the case with *–lych(e* adverbs in the a-verse, *-lych(e* adjectives normally occur in *standard* verses and *always* occupy a stave. There is another significant characteristic which distinguishes *–lych(e* adjectives from *–ly* adjectives: *-lych(e*

adjectives occur *only* in the syntactic structure of adjective + noun, in which a *–lych(e* adjective with stress *always* qualifies a following noun, on which the second stress falls; in the above examples, since the sounding of final *–e* is, in each case, grammatically justifiable (since all the adjectives are weak or plural), and would produce the standard or preferred disyllabic interval between two stresses, it is likely that *–lych* in the above examples was disyllabic and used to facilitate inflectional *–e*. The following a-verses are only slightly problematic, since they have the syntactic structure, 'many (a) + noun', which conveys plural sense, though the noun is strictly singular:

With mony **luflych** lorde	ledez of þe best	(*SG* 38)
Wyth mony **luflych** loupe	þat louked ful clene	(*SG* 792)
With mony a **borlych** best	al of brende golde	(*C* 1488)

Several examples from Chaucer's iambic verses confirm the sounding of final *–e* on a monosyllabic adjective (e.g. 'trewe' below) occurring in the same syntactic environment:[99]

Ful many a trewe man hath doon mescheef (A. KN 1326)

Similarly,

Ful many a tame leon and leopart	(A. KN 2186)
Ful many a riche contree hadde he wonne	(A. KN 864)
With a coroune of many a riche stoon	(E. CL 1118)
She hadde passed many a straunge strem	(A. GP 464)
Of many a verray, trewe wyf also	(E. MC 2285)[100]

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[99] On the possible sounding of grammatical final *–e* in Chaucer's work, see Donaldson, E. T., 'Chaucer' Final *–e*', *PMLA* 43 (1948), 1101-24; Samuels, M. L., 'Chaucerian Final "-e"', *N & Q* 217 (1972), 445-48; D. Burnley, 'Inflection in Chaucer's Adjectives', *NM* 83 (1982), 169-77. For an argument against this position, see J. G. Southworth, 'Chaucer's Final *–e* in Rhyme', *PMLA* 62 (1947), 910-35. For final *–e* in Hoccleve, see J. A. Jefferson, 'The Hoccleve Holographs and Hoccleve's Metrical Practice', in *Manuscripts and Texts: Editorial Problems in Later Middle English Literature*, ed. D. Pearsall (Cambridge, 1987), 95-109.

[100] The iambic metre requires the sounding of final *–e* on the second adjective 'trewe'; a parallel example can be attested at *St Erkenwald* 134a ('Mony a gay grete lorde'), a crowded a-verse involving a 'compound'-noun phrase; here, the spacing rule requires ictus to fall on the first adjective and the noun to produce a metrically required long dip between the two stresses, and this is made possible only by the sounding of the grammatically justified *–e* on 'grete', which is indicated by the spelling; otherwise, this verse would be, in the poems I have examined in this thesis, the only one anomalous instance of this type

At *LGW* 1102, the final *–e* on the trisyllabic-stem 'amorouse' (<OFr. *amorous*) seems to be suppressed:

> And many an amorouse lokyng and devys

The medial vowel being syncopated before liquid *r*, 'amorouse' is pronounced here as disyllabic. For 'amorouse' at *TC* 4. 1431, however, the metre requires sounding of the final *–e*, which is grammatically justifiable (for a weak adjective):

> Bigan for joie th'amorouse daunce (TC 4. 1431)

Considering these examples, one may safely assume that the sounding of *–e* on 'luflych' at *SG* 38 and 792 and on 'borlych' at *C* 1488 above is grammatically justified and confirms that *–lych* is only selected to facilitate inflectional *-e*.

In contrast with *–lych* adjectives, *-ly* adjectives can occur in other syntactic structures as well. As with *–ly* adverbs, it is *–ly* adjectives that are normally used in crowded a-verses, as in:

La3t to his **lufly** hed	and lyft hit vp sone	(*SG* 433)
To loke on oure **lofly** lorde	late bitydes	(*SG* 1804)
Of vche clene **comly** kynde	enclose seven make3	(*C* 334)
In **comly** comfort ful clos	and cortays worde3	(*C* 512)

Note that the *–ly* adjectives above are either stress-subordinated to the other two open-class words, or, if bearing ictus, forming part of an adjective + noun combination.[101] Stress-subordinated *comly* is, in each case, contextually less significant than the other two open-class words ('clene' and 'kynde' in *C* 334, 'comfort' and 'close' in *C* 512). *–lych(e* at *C* 334 would, with the application of the spacing rule, indicate ictus on *comlyche* instead of 'clene'.

(other than *WA* 425a) that does not follow the spacing rule (see p. 234 below). Later in this chapter (p. 184), I demonstrate that the spelling in *SE*, in fact, accurately reflects the metre.

[101] See p. 161 above.

There are instances in which (weak or plural) *–lych* adjectives—e.g. 'wynnelych' (< OE. *wynnlic*) and 'vnworþelych' (< OE. *unwurþlic*) below—occur with a medial vowel, which is not part of the stem:[102]

And þe **wynnelych** wyne	þerwith vche tyme	(*SG* 980)
Of þat **wynnelych** lorde	þat wonyes in heuen	(*C* 1807)
Of mony **borelych** bole	aboute bi þe diches	(*SG* 766)
And þe **borelych** burne	on bent þat hit kepez	(*SG* 2148)
Wolde ȝe, **worþilych** lorde,[103]	quoþ Wawan to þe kyng	(*SG* 343)
With her **vnworþelych** werk	me wlateȝ withinne	(*C* 305)

Medial vowels in the above examples probably have no syllabic value, since the sounding of final *–e* on *–lych* could be justified grammatically. A medial vowel in a *–lych(e* adjective is metrically significant in the b-verse, only where, as in *C* 1351 ('a worþelych quene') above, a sounded *–e* in *–lych(e* would not be grammatically accurate. The selection of *–lych(e* rather than *–ly* in the above lines probably reflects the poet's strong predilection for *–lych* adjectives where an adjective-noun phrase occupies two separate staves in a *non*-crowded verse, the disyllabic suffix preserving the standard rhythm between the two stresses.

There are only two instances in which *–lych* with a non-etymological medial vowel occurs in the *crowded* a-verse. The first one is from *Sir Gawain*:

His longe **louelych** lokkez	he layd ouer his croun	(*SG* 419)

Either the sounding of a non-etymological medial glide vowel or disyllabic pronunciation of *–lych* (which is more likely) indicates that the first ictus should fall on 'louelych' (rather than 'longe'), the semantically heavier adjective; the *–ly* form would, with the application of the spacing rule, indicate ictus on 'longe', if the non-etymological medial vowel were assumed to be merely graphical.

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[102] In ME, the adjective 'borelych' is spelled with or without *–e*; *OED* says no plausible etymon for the first element (*bor(e)-*) has yet been found in either OE or ON; *MED* compares the adverb *bor-līce* ('excellently'), which suggests that the medial *–e* is unetymological.

[103] The weak form occurs in adjectives used in the vocative case; see T. Mustanoja, *A Middle English Syntax*, 276.

Cleanness has the only other instance of *–lych* in a crowded a-verse; here the adjective occurs in the vocative case (as at *SG* 343a on p. 169 above):

Wende, **worþelych** wyȝt vus woneȝ to seche (*C* 471)

Here, the sounding of final *–e* in '–lych' is justified as the weak form also occurs in adjectives used in the vocative case. Since *–lych(e* is a marked form, occurring, nearly always, where the metre requires or prefers it to form a long dip, and where sounding of final *–e* is also grammatically justified, it is more likely that the non-etymological medial vowel in 'worþelych' is here only graphic and it is disyllabic '-lych' that serves to ensure the long dip, which indicates ictus on 'worþelych' and 'wyȝt', subordinating 'wende' at the beginning of the verse, where an open-class word is often absorbed into a verse-opening dip.

At *SG* 2224, *–lych* must be monosyllabic because the adjective is strong:

With a **borelych** bytte bende by þe halme (*SG* 2224)

But the medial vowel may well have syllabic value, providing the standard disyllabic dip between the two a-verse stresses. Again, one could conclude that the poet resorted to a sounded medial vowel only where *–lychë* could not be justified. At *SG* 1480, however, 'luflych' seems to be disyllabic as it stands, since it contains no medial vowel and the sounding of final *–e* of *-lych* is not grammatically justified:

And wyth a **luflych** loke ho layde hym þyse wordez (*SG* 1480)

Similarly,

With a **roghlych** rurd rowned in his ere (*P* 64)

There is obviously another reason at work here for the selection of *–lych*: the open-syllable *–ly* leads on to the following initial syllable more readily than *–lych*, which is a closed-syllable; *–lych* thus serves to slow down articulation, with resulting emphasis on each open-class element on which ictus falls. Whatever is the reason for the occurrence of *–lych* here, the above examples confirm the distributional pattern which I have argued characterises and distinguishes *–lych(e* adjectives from those in *–ly*: the use of *–lych* is restricted to a verse in which an adjective and the following noun

that it qualifies occupy *two separate staves*, whereas *–ly* occurs more freely in the alliterative long line, as a predicative or attributive adjective, as a noun, or as the adjective element of an adjective + noun combination.

There is only one a-verse involving a *–lych* adjective which is unmetrical as it stands:

Þe lady **luflych** com laȝande swete (*SG* 1757)

This a-verse lacks the long dip which must occur either before or after the first stress and is almost certainly corrupt—something also suggested by the fact that all other instances in the Cotton Nero poems of *–lych(e* adjectives occur only in the syntactic structure of adjective + noun. Interestingly, line *SG* 1218, about five hundred lines before this line, has a phrase similar to the one here:

Bot wolde ȝe, **lady louely** þen leue me grante (*SG* 1218)

It might be that the scribe was influenced by this a-verse and transposed 'luflych' with 'lady' in line 1757. Emendation to *Þe luflyche lady* would render the verse metrical, with sounding of grammatically justified final *–e*. Still, this would leave the verse atypically short in syllable count.

The Cotton Nero poems have only two other unmetrical b-verses involving *–lych(e* adjectives; but here it is impossible to insert a grammatically justifiable final *–e*:

Þat he watz flawen fro þe face of **frelych** dryȝtyn (*P* 214)
Þer hales in at þe halle dor an **aghlich** mayster (*SG* 136)

In the first instance, an article (*the*) or pronoun (*our*) could be inserted before the disyllabic 'frelych' to give the b-verse its metrically required long dip.[104] For *SG* 136, the insertion of a medial vowel is a possibility, since forms such as *ahelich* and *aȝeliche* are well attested in the *MED*.

Here is a brief summary of the foregoing discussion:

1) *–lych(e* for adjectives is a marked form;
2) *–lych(e* adjectives occur only in the syntactic pattern adjective + noun with ictus falling on each;
3) There are 15 b-verses in which *–lych(e* occurs, and in 11 out of 15 such b-verses, the

sounding of final *–e* in *–lych(e* is required by the metre (to create the obligatory long dip) *and* justified grammatically; three of these 11 b-verses have a *–lych(e* spelled with a *non*-etymological medial vowel ('worþelych' *P* 475b, 'broþelych' *C* 848b, and 'loþelych' *C* 1350b); in another two out of the 15 b-verses in which *–lych(e* occurs, syllabic final *–e* is not grammatically justified, but either there is a medial vowel serving to produce the extra unstressed syllable ('a worþelych quene' *C* 1351b), or the metre requires monosyllabic *–lych(e* ('to a worþlych prynce' *C* 49b); the remaining two b-verses are unmetrical as they stand (lacking the obligatory long dip), for disyllabic *–lych(e* is not grammatically justified and no medial vowel is indicated to render the *–lych(e* adjective trisyllabic ('of frelych dryȝtyn' *P* 214b, 'an aghlich mayster' *SG* 136b);

4) *–lych(e* occurs in 28 a-verses, in 16 of which disyllabic *–lych(e* following a monosyllabic stem seems to be serving to create the 'standard' or *preferred* rhythm of a disyllabic interval between the two a-verse stresses, and in which sounding of final *–e* is also grammatically justified; in 6 other standard a-verses (e.g. 'And þe wynnelych wyne' *SG* 980), the standard rhythm will be achieved by disyllabic *-lych(e* where the suppression of an unetymological medial vowel before a liquid has occurred; the suffix occurs twice in the crowded a-verse ('His longe louelych lokkez' *SG* 419a, 'Wende, worþelych wyȝt' *C* 471a), in which either the disyllabic *-lych(e* or a pronounced non-etymological medial vowel serves to insure the long dip, which, with the application of the spacing rule, dictates ictus on the stem of the *–lych(e* adjective and the following noun it qualifies; *-lych(e* occurs once in the standard a-verse ('With a borelych bytte' *SG* 2224a) where syllabic final *–e* is not grammatically justified, but in which the *–lych(e* adjective has a medial vowel; the suffix occurs twice in the standard a-verse in which *–lychĕ* is not grammatically justified nor medial vowel is present ('And wyth a luflych loke' *SG* 1480a, 'With a roghlych rurd' *P* 64a); the one remaining a-verse is unmetrical as it stands, lacking the obligatory long dip either before or after the first stress ('Þe lady luflych' *SG* 1757a).

In conclusion, the suffix *-lych(e* is spelled, in the Cotton Nero poems, always as *–lych* except a single instance of *–lyche* ('his luflyche deȝter' *C* 939b). However, the evidence from the examples above shows: (1) that *–lych(e* is disyllabic when the metre requires or prefers and where the sounding of final *–e* is grammatically justified (this being demonstrated most clearly by the distinction of *semly/semlych* and *comly/comlych*,

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[104] Cf. *C* 49 ('to a worþlych prynce') on p. 164 above.

two of the most frequently found adjectives in the Cotton Nero poems, but never spelled with the medial vowel which would form an alternative means of ensuring a long dip); (2) that *–lych(e* adjectives *always* bear ictus and are attributive (i.e. they are followed immediately by the nouns they qualify); (3) that, when *–lych(e* cannot grammatically have disyllabic pronunciation, a medial vowel might be indicated to meet metrical demands (e.g. 'a worthelych quene' *C* 1351b); (4) that, where a *non*-etymological glide vowel is by spelling indicated as a possibility *and* disyllabic pronunciation of *–lych(e* is possible but not indicated by spelling (e.g. 'And the wynnelych wyne' *C* 980a, 'tho worthelych leves' *P*475b),[105] it is difficult to prove categorically which of the two—a medial vowel or final *–e*—was assumed by the poet to have syllabic value, though the weight of evidence favours the latter.

These points make it necessary to reconsider one of Duggan's b-verse rules. Duggan argues that *x/x/(x)* is metrical only when a disyllabic adjective with stress on the first syllable is followed by a noun with stress on its first syllable;[106] he seeks the explanation for this sole exception to his b-verse rules in the silencing of grammatically justified *–e* in disyllabic adjectives.[107] However, the above discussion suggests that the *Gawain* poet, at least, exploits grammatical *–es* and medial vowels to achieve a trisyllabic adjective in the b-verse (e.g. 'his luflyche deȝter' *C* 939b, 'a worþelych quene' *C* 1351b), and etymological *–es* to attain a trisyllabic adverb (e.g. 'comlyche hade' *SG* 648b). If the *–lych* suffix (for adverbs and adjectives) could be disyllabic, and if a medial vowel could also have syllabic value to provide an extra syllable, and, last but not least, if, as I shall argue shortly, the present participle ending *–and(e* could also have disyllabic pronunciation, it comes to seem highly likely that the *Gawain* poet exploited grammatical and etymological *–es* (and medial vowels) to provide a b-verse with a long medial dip and thereby to avoid the x/x/(x) pattern when he could; moreover, these *–es* may also be prompted where the metre *prefers* rather than *demands*: i.e. to create the 'standard' rhythm of a disyllabic interval between the two a-verse stresses.

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[105] There is *no* instance in the Cotton Nero poems of *–lych(e* for adjectives spelled with an *etymological* medial vowel; *-lych(e* for adverbs occur ,only *once*, spelled with such etymological /e/ at *C* 18b ('hagherlych'); see p 157 above.

[106] Duggan, 'Meter', 231.

[107] See 4.3.3 'Present Participle *–and(e*' below.

4.3.3 Present participle *–and(e*

Regarding the syllabic quality of final *–e* in disyllabic adjectives, Duggan remarks that, though the sounding of final *–e* in monosyllabic-stemmed adjectives was still a lively metrical option among alliterative poets (including the *Gawain* poet), final *–e* in disyllabic adjectives had ceased to be sounded under any condition by the time the extant alliterative poems were written.[108] His b-verse rules render b-verses lacking a long dip before or after the first b-verse stress (e.g. (x)/x/(x)) unmetrical; but these rules are suspended for b-verses in which a disyllabic adjective with stress on its first syllable is immediately followed by a noun with stress on its first syllable. Thus, Duggan's rule would allow one to scan b-verses involving, for instance, a disyllabic participial adjective + noun (e.g. 'were blyknande perles' *C* 1467b) as x/x/x, suppressing the final *–e* of *–and(e*, and treat such verses as exceptions to his otherwise strict b-verse rules, regarding them as 'metrical'. However, Duggan also suggests the possibility of disyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e* in Middle English alliterative poetry.[109] In one of his most recent articles, he expresses an 'agnostic' position regarding the syllabic quality of final *–e* in *–and(e*.[110]

There is a good reason for Duggan's 'agnostic' stance, since his b-verse exception involving a disyllabic adjective is not without a problem. In the first place, the suffix *–and(e*, though it can form a participial adjective ('were blyknande perles' *C* 1467b), is normally used to form a present participle ('criande loude' *SG* 1088b). Interestingly, many of the b-verses involving monosyllabic stem + *-and(e* (as adjective or present participle) have, with the suppression of final *–e*, the 'problematic' rhythm, (x)/x/(x), which lacks a metrically required long dip. It thus seems strange that one should take b-verses with this rhythmic pattern to be 'metrical' when they involve an *–and(e adjective*, while rejecting those with an *–and(e present participle* occurring in the identical metrical position. With this point in mind, I will examine the distribution of

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[108] Duggan, 'Final *–e*', 144; cf.: '...one may with confidence assume, at least in the case of the Gawain-poet's works, that historical final *–e* on otherwise monosyllabic adjectives would have been pronounced in metrical context that require it. But the case stands quite otherwise with regard to dissyllabic adjectives' ('Final *–e*', 136).

[109] 'In view of the similarity of such b-verses to those with derivational and inflectional affixes like *–ful*, *-en*, *-ed*, and so forth, it would be difficult to argue that words like *doucand*, *farand*, *flawmand*, *starand*, and so on are necessarily trisyllabic. On the other hand, the extreme rarity of present participles in b-verses with *xx(x)/x/(x)* may in itself be evidence that dissyllabic *–ande* remained a lively option in the language' ('Final *–e* ', 143).

[110] '...it could be argued that the participial adjectives in *C* 1082: *And rial ryngande rotes...*; *SJ* 381: *Wode wedande wrop...*; and *SJ* 397: *A bal of bremande gold*...should be scanned Sww. I am agnostic on this head, though at the time the grammetrical patterns for Middle English alliterative verse were established, such participial adjectives would have been trisyllabic' ('Extended A-Verses', 73).

–and(e in the alliterative long line and consider whether or not the suffix *–and(e*, like *–ly/-lych(e*, was disyllabic when the metre required or preferred.

Let us first look at instances of the present participle in the b-verse. In the examples below, *-and(e* is always followed by another unstressed syllable, which is either a monosyllabic closed-class word or an initial unstressed syllable of the last-stave word. These verses are thus metrical whether or not the final *–e* is sounded:[111]

As þou hatz hette in þis halle	**herande** þise knyȝtes	(*SG* 450)
Þe alder he haylses	**heldande** ful lowe	(*SG* 972)
Til þe knyȝt com hymself	**kachande** his blonk	(*SG* 1581)
Wyth a starande ston	**stondande** alofte	(*SG* 1818)
Ȝet is þe lorde on þe launde	**ledande** his gomnes	(*SG* 1894)
For now is gode Gawayn	**goande** ryȝt here	(*SG* 2214)
Þenne in worlde watȝ a wyȝe	**wonyande** on lyue[112]	(*C* 293)
Þenne lasned þe loȝ	**lowkande** togeder	(*C* 441)
Hit saȝtled on a softe day	**synkande** to grounde	(*C* 445)
Þen he wendeȝ his way	**wepande** for care	(*C* 777)
Towarde þe mere of Mambre	**[morn]ande** for sorewe	(*C* 778)
Al in smolderande smoke	**smachande** ful ille	(*C* 955)
Þat watȝ a palayce of pryde	**passande** alle oþer	(*C* 1389)
And brode baneres þerbi	**blusnande** of gold	(*C* 1404)
Foles in foler	**flakerande** bitwene	(*C* 1410)
Non oþer forme bot a fust	**faylande** þe wryste	(*C* 1535)
Jonas toward port Japh	ay **janglande** for tene	(*P* 90)
For he watz fer in þe flod	**foundande** to Tarce	(*P* 126)
Slypped upon a sloumbe-selepe	and **sloberande** he routes	(*P* 186)
Ay hele over hed	**hourlande** aboute	(*P* 271)
Þre dayes and þre nyȝt	ay **þenkande** on dryȝtyn	(*P* 294)
Jonas al joyles	and **janglande** upryses	(*P* 433)

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[111] At *C* 293, *C* 1410, and *P* 186, the present participle occurs spelled with a medial vowel. Elision would have occurred before the following vowel or unstressed *h*, at *SG* 1581, 1818, 1894, *C* 293, 1389, 1404, *P* 186, 271, 294, and 433.

[112] The medial vowels in 'wonyande' (< OE. *wunian*) here, and 'flakerande' (ME. *flakeren*) at *C* 1410b and 'sloberande' (ME. *sloberen* [prob. from MDu. *slobberen* ('to walk through mud', 'feed noisily')]) at *P* 186b are all part of the stem.

In those of the above lines where elision does not occur, it is difficult to determine the syllabic quality of final *–e* in *and(e.* But, it is worth emphasising again that disyllabic *–and(e* is there not required to provide the obligatory dip.

However, there are several instances (five in *Sir Gawain*, three in *Cleanness*, none in *Patience*) in which final *–e* must be sounded to produce the metrically required long dip:

Þen grene aumayl on golde	**glowande** bryȝter	(*SG* 236)
A schelde and a scharp spere	**schinande** bryȝt	(*SG* 269)
Bende his bresed broȝez	**blycande** grene	(*SG* 305)
Þenne he carped to þe knyȝt	**criande** loude	(*SG* 1088)
Þe lady luflych com	**laȝande** swete	(*SG* 1757)
Fro fawre half of þe folde	**flytande** loude	(*C* 950)
Þe rayn rueled adoun	**ridlande** þikke	(*C* 953)
By þat watȝ alle on a hepe	**hurlande** swyþee	(*C* 1211)

If monosyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e* is to be assumed, all the b-verses above have the (x)/x/(x) rhythm, which Duggan allows only for a b-verse involving a disyllabic adjective followed by the noun it qualifies. Interestingly, however, the b-verses quoted differ from the previous list in involving a present participle *–and(e* on *monosyllabic* stem + adverb/adjective with stress on its first syllable (i.e. a *one*-word complement with stress on its first syllable), and the very recurrence of this grammatical pattern in the same metrical environment strongly suggests that the poet here exploited disyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e* to create the metrically required long dip. Moreover, since the above b-verses are all direct continuations of the preceding a-verses, it is highly unlikely that the original had one or more words preceding the present participles, which would form a long dip, but were dropped in the process of scribal transmission. It may also be worth pointing out that, in the Cotton Nero poems, the *–and(e* suffix *never* occurs at line-ending (where two unstressed syllables cannot occur)—something for which the possible disyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e* seems to be the only explanation.

The following b-verses have the grammatical frame 'participial adjective + noun', in which, as in the b-verses above, *-and(e* is affixed to a *monosyllabic* stem and followed by a *one*-word complement with ictus on its first syllable. Duggan's b-verse rule

would allow one to scan these b-verses as x/x/(x), suppressing the final *–e* of *–and(e*, but still treat them as 'metrical'. Considering the examples discussed above, however, it is more likely that final *–e* in *-and(e* as a participial adjective, if affixed to a *monosyllabic* stem and followed by a *one*-word continuant with stress on its first syllable, might also have syllabic value:

And vnder fete, on þe flet	of **folȝande** sute	(*SG* 859)
Þat sete on hym semly	wyth **saylande** skyrtez	(*SG* 865)
With mony leude ful lyȝt	and **lemande** torches	(*SG* 1119)
Loude he watz ȝayned	with **ȝarande** speche	(*SG* 1724)
As for bobaunce and bost	and **bolnande** priyde	(*C* 179)
And quelle alle þat is quik	with **quauende** flodeȝ	(*C* 324)
Þe roȝe raynande ryg	þe **raykande** waweȝ	(*C* 382)
Þat þe flod nade al freten	with **feȝtande** waȝeȝ	(*C* 404)
Þe arc houen watȝ on hyȝe	with **hurlande** goteȝ	(*C* 413)
And þryeȝ fyfty þe flod	of **folwande** dayeȝ	(*C* 429)
What, þay ȝeȝed and ȝolped	of **ȝestande** sorȝe	(*C* 846)
For alle þe blomes of þe boȝes	wer **blyknande** perles	(*C* 1467)
Þer he dased in þat duste	with **droppande** teres	(*P* 383)
For hit watz playn in þat place	for **plyande** grevez	(*P* 439)

There are four instances in which a participial adjective occurs spelled with a medial vowel:

No worldeȝ goud hit wythinne	bot **wyndowande** askes	(*C* 1048)
Summe lepre, summe lome	and **lomerande** blynde	(*C* 1094)
And alle þe fruyt in þo formes	of **flaumbeande** gemmes	(*C* 1468)
Bi mony rokkez ful roȝe	and **rydelande** strondes	(*P* 254)

Only at *C* 1468 is the medial vowel *not* part of the stem, and it could there scarcely have been sounded. Syncopation of the medial vowel, technically possible, is counter-indicated by *C* 1048, in which that medial vowel is required, since the final *–e* of *–and(e* is elided with the following vowel. It is impossible, in the cases of *C* 1094 and *P* 254, where a medial vowel is part of the stem, to determine with certainty

whether the final *–e* was syllabic or not. If the suppression of a medial vowel before liquid could be assumed, these b-verses, too, will have the pattern,'*-and(e* following monosyllabic stem + one-word continuant with ictus on its first syllable'.

Let us now look at instances of the present participle *–and(e* in standard a-verses. Here, one or more long dips are present whether the *–e* is sounded or not.[113] It is impossible to determine with certainty the syllabic quality of final *–e*. But as *–and(e* is followed, in each case, by a two- or three-word continuant that constitutes a long dip without the sounded *-e*, it is less likely that *–and(e* in the following a-verses was disyllabic:

Þer as **claterande** fro þe crest	þe colde borne rennez	(*SG* 731)
Carande for his costes	lest he ne keuer schulde	(*SG* 750)
Þenne **laȝande** quoþ þe lorde,	Now leng þe byhoues	(*SG* 1068)
Al **laȝande** þe lady	lanced þo bourdez	(*SG* 1212)
Strakande ful stoutly	mony stif motez	(*SG* 1364)
And he **ȝarrande** hym ȝelde	and ȝedoun þe water	(*SG* 1595)
Wreȝande hym ful weterly	with a wroth noyse	(*SG* 1706)
Sykande ho sweȝe doun	and semly hym kyssed	(*SG* 1796)
Ay **rechatande** aryȝt	til þay þe renk seȝen	(*SG* 1911)
Strakande ful stoutly	in hor store hornez	(*SG* 1923)
Debatande with hymself	quat hit be myȝt	(*SG* 2179)
Whyrlande out of a wro	wyth a felle weppen	(*SG* 2222)
And ay **glydande** wyth his God	his grace watȝ þe more	(*C* 296)
Rypande of vche a ring	þe reynyeȝ and hert	(*C* 592)
Not **trawande** þe tale	þat I þe to schewed	(*C* 662)
Al **sykande** he sayde,	Sir, with yor leve	(*C* 715)
And ay **goande** on your gate	wythouten agayn-tote	(*C* 931)
Prechande hem þe perile	and beden hem passe fast	(*C* 942)
Folȝande þat oþer flote	and fonde hem bilyue	(*C* 1212)
Ay **biholdand**[114] þe honde	til hit hade al grauen	(*C* 1544)
And twentyfolde **twynande**	hit to his tos raȝt	(*C* 1691)

[113] Elision will take place at *SG* 1595, 1706, 1796, 1911, 2222, *C* 592, 715, 931, 942, *P* 270, and 327; and an etymological medial vowel occurs at *SG* 731 and *SG* 1911.
[114] This is one of the only two instances in the Cotton Nero poems in which *–ande* is spelled *–and*.

Relande in by a rop	a rode þat hym þo3t	(*P* 270)
Prayande him for peté	his prophete to here	(*P* 327)
Wepande ful wonderly	alle his wrange dedes	(*P* 384)

The present participle also occurs in crowded a-verses. In the following examples, ictus always (except *C* 783) falls on the participle, normally followed by a long dip before the pre-caesural second ictus:

Talkkande bifore þe **hy3e** table	of trifles ful hende	(*SG* 108)
Driuande to þe **he3e** dece	dut he no woþe	(*SG* 222)
Rudelez **rennande** on ropez	red golde ryngez	(*SG* 857)
Suande þis **wylde** swyn	til þe sunne schafted	(*SG* 1467)
Renaud com **richchande**	þur3 a ro3e greue	(*SG* 1898)
Schyre **schaterande**[115] on **schorez**	þer þay doun schowued	(*SG* 2083)
As hit com **glydande** adoun	on glode hym to schende	(*SG* 2266)
Þroly **þrublande** in **þronge**	þrowen ful þykke	(*C* 504)
Meuande **mekely** togeder	as myry men 3onge	(*C* 783)
Trynande ay a **hy3e** trot	þat torne neuer dorsten	(*C* 976)
Burnes **berande** þe **bredes**	vpon brode skeles	(*C* 1405)
Louande þeron lese godde3	þat lyf haden neuer	(*C* 1719)
Segges **slepande** were **slayne**	er þay slyppe my3t	(*C* 1785)
Þe folk 3et **haldande** his fete	þe fysch hym tyd hentes	(*P* 251)
Lys **loltrande** þerinne	lokande to toune	(*P* 458)

-and(e was certainly monosyllabic at *SG* 857, *SG* 2083, *P* 251, etc., where elision takes place. In no other instances is the sounding of final *–e* in *–and(e* metrically required; note that *–and(e* is either affixed to a disyllabic stem ('schaterande'), followed by a one-word continuant with stress on its *second* (and *not* first) syllable ('þerinne') or a two- (or more) word continuant (e.g. 'were slayne', 'þeron lese godde3'), or occurring at verse-ending ('richchande'). Note also that at *SG* 1898a *–ande* occurs at the a-verse ending, a position where a long dip can occur after the pre-caesural stress (e.g. 'And vsed hem vnþryftyly vchon on oþer' *C* 267),[116] as opposed to line-ending, which

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[115] The medial vowel in 'schaterande' (ME. *scateren*) is part of the stem.

[116] For the caesura rule, see p. 73 above.

allows only a short dip to occur after the line-final stress. It is worth emphasising, again, that the absence of *–and(e* at line-closure (but not at a-verse ending) may be attributed to the possible disyllabic pronunciation of the suffix *–and(e.*

Let us now turn to participial adjectives occurring in the standard a-verse. The a-verses below are metrical as they stand without disyllabic *–and(e*, having a long dip at verse-opening. With the sounding of final *–e*, however, they will have the standard disyllabic interval between the two stresses. It is possible that syllabic *–e* was useful in producing not only the required, but also the *preferred*, metre:

When þe **donkande** dewe	dropez of þe leuez	(*SG* 519)
Thus wyth **laȝande** lotez	þe lorde hit tayt makez	(*SG* 988)
Wyth such a **crakkande** kry	as klyffes haden brusten	(*SG* 1166)
Wyth a **starande** ston	stondande alofte	(*SG* 1818)
And wyth a **rynkande** rurde	he to þe renk sayde	(*SG* 2337)
And þe **blykkande** belt	he bere þeraboute	(*SG* 2485)
A wel **dutande** dor	don on þe syde	(*C* 320)
Such a **rowtande** ryge	þat rayne schal swyþe	(*C* 354)
Oþer any **sweande** sayl	to seche after hauen	(*C* 420)
As þat **lyftande** lome	luged aboute	(*C* 443)
For quen þe **swemande** sorȝe	soȝt to his hert	(*C* 563)
For he is þe **gropande** God	þe grounde of alle dedeȝ	(*C* 591)
Into þat **malscrande** mere	marred bylyue	(*C* 991)
As a **stynkande** stanc	þat stryed synne	(*C* 1018)
Such a **dasande** drede	dusched to his hert	(*C* 1538)
Suche a **chaungande** chaunce	in þe chef halle	(*C* 1588)
And for þat **froþande** fylþe	þe fader of heuen	(*C* 1721)
In his **glowande** glorye	and gloumbes ful lyttel	(*P* 94)
And þy **stryvande** stremez	of stryndez so mony	(*P* 311)
In on **daschande** dam	dryvez me over	(*P* 312)
When þe **dawande** day	dryȝtyn con sende	(*P* 445)

It is important to notice that *–and(e* in the above examples, too, is affixed to a monosyllabic stem and immediately followed by a complement of only one word with ictus on its first syllable.

At *C* 1038, a long dip does not occur at verse-opening, but given elision between '–ande' and the following unstressed vowel, 'a-', this a-verse, too, has the standard rhythm with a disyllabic interval between the two stresses:

Þe **spumande** aspaltoun	þat spyseręȝ sellen	(*C* 1038)

There are five instances in which a participial adjective occurs with a medial vowel, which, in the adjectives below, are all part of the stem:

As alle þe **clamberande** clyffes	hade clatered on hepes	(*SG* 1722)
Þe **werbelande** wynde	wapped fro þe hyȝe	(*SG* 2004)
And þaȝ þe **glyterande** golde	glent vpon endez	(*SG* 2039)
Þe **wayferande** frekeȝ	on fote and on hors	(*C* 79)
Al in **smolderande** smoke	smachande ful ille	(*C* 955)[117]

Here, the preferred rhythm of a disyllabic interval between the stresses can be achieved without disyllabic *–and(e*, as the participial adjectives has, in all instances, a disyllabic stem.[118]

The following are the instances of a participial adjective used as a noun, or as a predicative or postmodifying adjective:

And alle his fetures **folȝande**	in forme þat he hade	(*SG* 145)
Lowande and lufly	alle his lymmez vnder	(*SG* 868)
Bot þrete is **vnþryuande**	in þede þer I lende	(*SG* 1499)
And a wyndow wyd **vpon[ande]**	wroȝt vpon lofte	(*C* 318)
What if þretty **þryuande**	be þrad in ȝon touneȝ	(*C* 751)

'Þryuande' at *C* 751 unambiguously shows that *-and* can occur at verse-ending if it is in the a-verse ('vpon[ande]' is an emendation by J. J. Anderson from MS *vpon*). Since elision between the final *–e* of *–ande* and a following vowel is possible at *SG* 145 and *SG* 1499,[119] the disyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e* in these cases is inconclusive.

Participial adjectives in crowded a-verses are particularly important. The following

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[117] I also cite this line when *–ande(e* in the b-verse is discussed .
[118] However, the syncopation of the medial vowel is technically possible; see p. 177 above.
[119] However, the caesura might serve to prevent elision.

a-verses have the syntactic structure of what I call a 'compound'-noun phrase (i.e. adjective, or very rarely, adverb + adjective followed by noun). It is in the participial adjectives occurring in this syntactic environment that the syllabic quality of final *–e* becomes metrically significant in the a-verse:

Fayre **fannand** fax	vmbefoldes his schulderes	(*SG* 181)
Wiȝt **wallande** joye	warmed his hert	(*SG* 1762)
And fele **þryuande** þonkkez	he þrat hom to haue	(*SG* 1980)
Felle **temptande** tene	towched his hert	(*C* 283)
Þe mukel **lauande** logh	to þe lyfte rered	(*C* 366)
Þe roȝe **raynande** ryg	þe raykande waweȝ	(*C* 382)[120]
Ryol **rollande** fax	to raw sylk lyke	(*C* 790)
When bryȝt **brennande** brondeȝ	ar bet þeravnder	(*C*1012)
And rial **ryngande** rotes	and þe reken fyþel	(*C*1082)
A wylde **walterande** whal[121]	as wyrde þen schaped	(*P* 247)
Þe pure **poplande** hourle[122]	playes on my heved	(*P* 319)

If the final *–e* of *–and(e* is to be suppressed, the spacing rule (which I have demonstrated is governing crowded a-verses) dictates the first ictus on the first adjective (or adverb) and the second ictus on the noun at the pre-caesural position. However, the second adjective (i.e. the participial adjective) is in each case semantically more important than the word preceding, and would more naturally bear stress, the first adjective (or adverb) being absorbed into the opening dip. This can be achieved simply by sounding the final *–e* on the *–and(e* ending. And, since *–and(e* , in all cases, conforms to the rule that is emerging (i.e. being affixed to a monosyllabic stem and followed by a one-word continuant with stress on its first syllable), it is highly likely that *–and(e* is there, too, disyllabic. Disyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e* is less secure at *P* 247, where the participial adjective occurs with a medial vowel that is part of the

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[120] I also cite this line when *–and(e* in the b-verse is discussed (p. 177).

[121] The medial vowel in 'walterande' is part of the stem; Anderson takes 'walterande' to have derived from MLG. *walteren*. *MED* says 'walterande' is ppl. from *walten*, which is probably derived from OE *-wæltan*; *P* 247 is the only instance of ppl. recorded in the *MED*.

[122] At *WA* 1277a ('Þe pure populande hurle'), the adjective is spelled with a medial vowel. But here, I take the adjective to have a monosyllabic stem. *OED* defines *popland* as participial adjective deriving from v. *popple*, which has the form of a frequentative of v. *pop*, but may well be an independent onomatopoeic formation, expressive of sound and action. *MED* does not give the etymology of this word, but suggests MDu. *popelende*, ppl. of *popelen* v. for comparison. *P* 319 and *WA* 1277 above are the only instances recorded in the *MED*.

stem.[123] At *SG* 181, on the other hand, syllabic value is most probably given to the final *–e*, though it is not indicated by the spelling. 'Fannand' here and 'biholdand' at *C* 1544 are the only two instances in the Cotton Nero poems in which *–and* is spelled without final *–e*.[124]

There are two instances in crowded a-verses of a participial adjective which does not form a 'compound'-noun phrase. At *C* 1017, the adjective is predicative, and the sounding or suppression of final *–e* is here metrically irrelevant, as a final *–e* would be elided with the following vowel:

Blo, **blubrande**, and blak unblyþe to neȝe (*C* 1017)

As there is still a long dip between 'blubrande' and 'blak', the spacing rule dictates ictus on these words. *SG* 1819 is slightly more problematic, however, since it is the syllabic quality of final *–e* that will determine the stress assignment of this crowded a-verse:

Þat bere **blusschande** bemez as þe bryȝt sunne (*SG* 1819)

As '-ande' is affixed to a monosyllabic stem and followed by a one-word continuant with stress on its first syllable, 'blusschande' is here probably trisyllabic with pronounced final *-e*. The spacing rule will then dictate the first stress on 'blusschande', which has much more semantic force than the preceding routine verb 'bere',[125] and collocating with 'bemez' and 'bryȝt' serves to emphasise the beautiful splendour of the 'riche rynk' that the Lady offers to Gawain on the third of her visits to his bedroom; thus stress on 'blusschande' is also contextually indicated.

The following lines are unmetrical as they stand, containing a verse which lacks the required long dip. However, if one takes the conjunction 'and(e)' as the suffix *–and(e*, forming participial adjectives (*glaumande*, *glamand*, *glaymande*),[126] these verses would, with the sounding of the historically justified *–e*, become perfectly metrical:

Such **glaum ande gle** glorious to here (*SG* 46)

Much **glam and gle** glent vp þerinne (*SG* 1652)

He glydes in by the giles þurȝ **glaym ande glette** (*P* 269)

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[123] Again, the syncopation of the medial vowel before 'r' is technically possible.
[124] *SE* has two such instances, which I will discuss on pp. 184.
[125] *Bere* at verse-opening is also stress-subordinated at *SG* 2151a : 'Ne *bere* þe felaȝschip þurȝ þis fryth'.
[126] N. Davis denies this possibility, saying that 'there is no evidence of a verb formed from ON. *glaum-r*, 'merry noise'; see note to line 46 on p. 73 of the edition.

Here, too, as in other cases where disyllabic *–and(e* is metrically required or preferred, *-and(e* is affixed to a monosyllabic stem and followed by a continuant of only one word with stress on its first syllable.

Another point needs to be made before the conclusion. Unlike the final *–e* of the suffix *–lych(e*, *-and(e* is almost always spelled with final *–e*, except for two instances: *SG* 181a 'Fayre fannand fax' and *C* 1544a 'Ay biholdand þe honde', in which sounding of final *–e* is required and indicated by the rule deduced. Outside the Cotton Nero poems, *SE* has two instances of *–and* (without a spelled *–e*), where the metre does not require the sounding of final *–e*:

Þagh I be unworthi,	al **wepand** he sayde	(*SE* 122)
Lyftand up his egh-lyddes	he loused such wordes	(*SE* 178)

In both cases, *-and* occurs as present participle, and its monosyllabic pronunciation—given elision between *–ande* and the following unstressed monosyllables—is indicated by the spelling. Now let us look at the other instances of *–and(e* in *SE*:

And als bryȝt of hor blee	in **blysnande** hewes	(*SE* 87)
To þe liche þer hit lay	with **lavande** teres	(*SE* 314)
Al with **glisnande** golde	his gowne wos hemmyd	(*SE* 78)
For þe ay-**lastande** life	þat lethe shall neuer	(*SE* 347)

Importantly, these examples, too, have a monosyllabic stem preceding *-and(e* and a following one-word complement with ictus on its first syllable—the pattern which is shared by all the other verses in which disyllabic *–and(e* is metrically required or preferred. All participial adjectives above are spelled *-ande* and occur only where the metre requires the sounding of such *–e* (*SE* 87, 314), or prefers it (*SE* 78, 347), providing the a-verses with the standard rhythm of a disyllabic interval between the two ictuses. It seems that the spelling in *SE*, here as elsewhere, accurately conveys the presence or absence of a syllabic *–e* on a word involving a historically justifiable final *–e*.[127]

In summary, if the sounding of etymological *–e* in *–and(e* is ruled out, the (x)/x/(x) pattern occurs not only in b-verses involving *–and(e* as disyllabic adjective, but also in those involving *–and(e* as present participle; disyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e* can

restore all such verses to regular b-verse rhythm with a long medial dip; if syllabic *–e* can also be assumed in the a-verse, it will provide many a-verses involving participial or adjectival *–and(e* with the standard disyllabic interval between the two stresses, and would restore *SG* 46a ('Such glaum ande gle') and 1652a ('Much glam and gle') to metricality; equally importantly, all the possible instances of disyllabic *–and(e* share the same syntactic and rhythmic pattern: *-and(e* following monosyllabic stem + one-word continuant with ictus on its first syllable; last but not least, the complete absence of *–and(e* from line-terminal position further suggests the possibility, or rather the probability, of disyllabic *–and(e*: for, if the suffix was assumed by the poet always to be monosyllabic, there should be some, if not many, instances of line-ending *–and(e* attested in the Cotton Nero poems.

It is generally agreed that in late Middle English period, schwa in inflectional affixes such as *–ed* and *–es* was still sounded on monosyllabic stems (i.e. after a stressed syllable).[128] By analogy, final *-e* in *-and(e*—whether occurring as participial adjective or present participle—was probably sounded on monosyllabic stems *only* when immediately followed by a word with ictus on its first syllable; [129] and a non-etymological medial vowel is probably merely graphical. But *–and(e* was probably monosyllabic, whether or not final *–e* is spelled, when *–and(e* has a two- or three-word continuant, and where, as a result, a metrically required (or preferred) long dip is always present without sounded final *–e* (e.g. 'synkande to grounde' *C* 445b, 'Carande for his costes' *SG* 750a); monosyllabic *–and(e* is less secure where an *etymological* medial vowel is present and where *–and(e* is followed by a one-word continuant with ictus on its first syllable—e.g. *P* 254b 'and rydelande strondes' and *SG* 2004a 'Þe werbelande wynde'—because the medial vowel could be suppressed before a liquid or nasal. If *–and(e* in these cases should be assumed to be monosyllabic, it would then be possible, at least in the Cotton Nero poems, that the spelling *–ande*, like *–lych(e*, represented two possible—monosyllabic or disyllabic—pronunciations. The above study certainly provides plenty of evidence to support the hypothesis that disyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e* remained a lively metrical option even in a dialect where *–e* was recessive.

Regarding Duggan's rule involving b-verses with a disyllabic adjective, it is

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[127] See also p. 167, n. 100 above.

[128] F. Mossé, *Handbook of Middle English*, 35.

[129] Contrast *P* 458a ('Lys **loltrande** þerinne), where '-ande', followed by a one-word continuant with ictus on its *second* (and not its first) syllable, is probably monosyllabic, and *C* 1038a ('Þe **spumande** aspaltoun'), in which elision takes place between '-ande' and the initial unstressed vowel ('a-') of the following one-word continuant (which has ictus on its second syllable).

reasonable to conclude that the sounding of final *–e* is probable, at least, on monosyllabic-stemmed adjectives in *–and(e* and *–lych(e*, if not on other adjectives. Even if alliterative poets—including, perhaps, the *Gawain* poet—indeed allowed themselves to write a b-verse with the (x)/x/(x) rhythm when it has the 'disyllabic adjective + noun' construction, it seems to me evident that the *Gawain* poet avoided this when he could, and did not recognize it as 'good license'.

I am not here denying or questioning the muteness of final *–e* in *the poet's dialect*, nor asserting, as Cable does, that every historically justified *–e* must be pronounced. Rather, I argue that syllabic *–e* counts in certain conditions and is exploited *when the metre requires or prefers*, and that 'archaic' pronunciation was thus exploited by the poet to meet the requirements of the demanding metre.[130] From all the evidence presented above, we may now safely conclude that, for the *Gawain* poet at least, the sounding of final *–e* was, like *to/for to* + infinitive and *on/vpon fold*, one of the useful and frequently-exploited means to achieve metricality.

4.4 The intensifier *ful* and its metrical functions

In Middle English poetry, intensifiers such as *ful*, *al*, and *so* occur often as mere metrical fillers, having little semantic significance themselves. Chaucer, for instance, used them for his iambic lines. I have demonstrated above that the *Gawain* poet exploited doublets such as *to/for to* + infinitive, *on/vpon*, and *-ly/-lych(e* to write metrical half-lines.[131] The metrical behaviour of the intensifier *ful* provides further

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[130] Putter and Stokes convincingly argue that final *–e* is syllabic when the metre requires; see their 'Spelling', 82, especially, n. 11. I would further argue that the *Gawain* poet also exploits grammatical and etymological *–es* where the metre *prefers*: that is, to create the 'standard' rhythm of a disyllabic interval between stresses.

[131] The auxiliary *con* is frequently used in iambic poetry to meet metrical demands. The *Gawain* poet also exploits *con* for this purpose in his rhyming stanzas, but very sparingly in his alliterative long lines. But as was the case with *to/for to* doublets, when *con* occurs in the alliterative long line, it serves metrical purposes; in b-verses such as *C* 301b ('to Noe con speke') and *C* 363b ('and bonkeȝ con ryse'), *con* serves to create the obligatory long dip; it may provide a verse with one alliterative stress, as in *C* 768a ('And he conueyen hym con'); and in the crowded a-verse (*P* 138a 'When both brethes *con* blowe'), *con* serves to create a long dip between 'brethes' and 'blow', so that ictus will fall, with the application of the spacing rule, on these semantically heavy words; otherwise there would be no need to use the periphrastic expression only at this particular instance, as the past tense could be conveyed simply by *blw(e)* or *blowed* (e.g. 'All þat euer ber bugle blowed at ones' *SG* 1913). On the use of *con* in the Cotton Nero poems, see M. Tajima, 'The *Gawain*-Poet's Use of *Con* as a Periphrastic Auxiliary', *Neuphilologisch Mitteilungen* 76 (1975), 429-38, and Putter and Stokes, 'Spelling', 78-9.

evidence for the metrical rules that I have been arguing govern b-verses, standard a-verses (i.e. those with only two possible ictus positions) and crowded a-verses (i.e. those with three or more potential ictus positions). I cite all relevant examples of *ful* from *Sir Gawain* and list those from *Cleanness* and *Patience* in the appendices at the very end.

4.4.1 *Ful* in b-verses

a) *ful* occurring after the head stave

The b-verses in *Sir Gawain* present numerous instances of *ful*, the majority of which are prompted by metrical exigencies.[132] The use of *ful* for metrical convenience becomes even more obvious when one compares b-verses which involve *ful* with those which do not, but which have a similar syntactic structure. For instance, *mony*, which often occurs at line-closure, postmodifying a preceding noun (on which the first b-verse ictus regularly falls), is frequently accompanied by *ful* to create a metrically required long medial dip. Five such instances occur in *Sir Gawain*:

Þer tournayed tulkes	by tymez **ful** mony	(*SG* 41)
Wel cresped and cemmed	wyth knottes **ful** mony	(*SG* 188)
Aywan, and Errik	and oþer **ful** mony	(*SG* 551)
Arayed for þe rydyng	with renkkez **ful** mony	(*SG* 1134)
Huntes hyȝed hem þeder	with hornez **ful** mony	(*SG* 1910)

Note that the first ictus-bearing words are all disyllabic with stress on their first syllables. However, *ful* does not occur where the first b-verse ictus is preceded by a long dip (as in 284b below), or is followed by other function words before *mony* (310b, 454b), or where the first ictus-bearing word is of more than two syllables (529b):

For hit is ȝol and Nwe ȝer	and here ar ȝep mony	(*SG* 284)
Þat al þe rous rennes of	þurȝ ryalmes so mony	(*SG* 310)
Þe knyȝt of þe grene chapel	men knowen me mony	(*SG* 454)
And þus ȝirnez þe ȝere	in ȝisterdayez mony	(*SG* 529)

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[132] In his discussion on *Pearl*, Duggan also points out the use of *ful* for metrical reasons; see his 'Libertine Scribes', 226.

Here, it is worth pointing out that, although the intensifier 'so', like *ful*, here serves metrical purposes, it is often a necessary part of a syntactical 'so...that' construction. *Ful*, on the other hand, is almost always a mere intensifier used as a metrical filler.

There is only one instance of *mony* in a b-verse that is unmetrical as it stands, due to its lack of a long dip:

So did hit þere on þat day	þurȝ dayntés mony	(*SG* 998)

Considering the evidence presented above, *ful* should perhaps be inserted before *mony* to produce the obligatory long dip. Alternatively, disyllabic 'dayntés' could be emended to trisyllabic *dayntyes*.[133]

Similarly, the construction *ful* + *ofte* at line-ending regularly occurs to ensure a long dip:

And so after þe halme	halched **ful** ofte	(*SG* 218)
Douteles he hade ben ded	and dreped **ful** ofte	(*SG* 725)
Þe lorde luflych aloft	lepez **ful** ofte	(*SG* 981)
Bot þe lorde ouer þe londez	launced **ful** ofte	(*SG* 1561)
Hauilounez, and herkenez	bi heggez **ful** ofte	(*SG* 1708)

Ful may occur where the word bearing the first b-verse stress is (or may be) trisyllabic, and where, consequently, the intensifier will produce a long medial dip of three (rather than two) unstressed syllables. Such is the case at 65b:

Nowel nayted onewe	neuened **ful** ofte	(*SG* 65)

However, the fact that *ful* occurs here suggests that 'neuened' is disyllabic (with the predictable suppression of the medial vowel before a nasal). It is worth pointing out that like *vpon*,[134] *ful* never occurs in the b-verse where it would produce a four-syllable

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[133] *Daynté* or *dayntye* (< OFr. *deint(i)é*) elsewhere occurs as a noun 7 times in *SG* (121, 483, 1250, 1266, 1401, 1662, 1889), and the latter form occurs (as plural) only at 483a ('Of alle dayntyez double'), in which trisyllabic, rather than disyllabic, pronunciation of 'dayntyez' is highly likely, for it produces the 'standard' rhythm of a disyllabic interval between the stresses; *Cleanness* has two instances—trisyllabic pronunciation of 'dayntyeȝ' is confirmed at 1046b ('of dayntyeȝ oute'); in view of this line, 'dayntys' at 38b ('with dayntys serued') should be emended to trisyllabic *dayntyeȝ* so that the verse will have its obligatory long dip and thus become metrical.

[134] *Ful* could perhaps be compared with *vpon*, a disyllabic alternative to monosyllabic *on*; *vpon* mostly

dip. Corroborative evidence for the use of *ful* as a metrical filler can also be provided by b-verses with line-final *oft* not preceded by *ful*:

Mo ferlyes on þis folde	han fallen here oft	(*SG* 23)
Wyȝez þe walle wyn	weȝed to hem oft	(*SG* 1403)
Haled to hym of her arewez	hitten hym oft	(*SG* 1455)
Þus hym frayned þat fre	and fondet hym ofte	(*SG* 1549)
For ȝe haf deserued, for soþe,	sellyly ofte	(*SG* 1803)
Bot in syngne of my surfet	I schal se hit ofte	(*SG* 2433)

Ful is absent from the above b-verses, because other function words or a disyllabic adverb ending serve to create the obligatory long dip. There is only a single instance of *ofte* that is not preceded by a long medial dip:

And mony aventure in vale	and venquyst ofte	(*SG* 2482)

As the obligatory long dip does not occur either before or after the head stave, *ful* should perhaps be inserted before 'ofte', unless 'venquyst' represents or is an error for *venquyshëd*.[135]

Line-final *(ful) clene* shows the same distributional pattern. *Ful* occurs where the metre requires, as in:

With pelure pured apert	þe pane **ful clene**	(*SG* 154)
With polaynez piched þerto	policed **ful clene**	(*SG* 576)
Wyth mony luflych loupe	þat louked **ful clene**	(*SG* 792)
Boþe his paunce and his platez	piked **ful clene**	(*SG* 2017)

It is worth emphasising again that the head stave in the above b-verses is always occupied by a disyllabic word with stress on its first syllable[136](syncopation of inflectional schwa would occur in 'policed' at 576), and preceded by no dip or a short dip. *Full* does not appear, however, where a long dip is achieved before the head stave,

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serves to create an obligatory long dip in the b-verse, but it also occurs—though very rarely—where it will create a trisyllabic dip rather than a more common disyllabic one (e.g. 'and vpon folde cheryched' *C* 1644b), but never occurs where it would produce a four-syllable dip; see 4.1 above.

[135] The inflectional ending, *–ed*, is normally syncopated on disyllabic stems (e.g. 'purtrayed withinne' *C* 1465b), but it must be syllabic at *C* 1536b ('purtrayëd lettres') and *C* 1784b ('þat scomfytëd mony') for the verses to have their obligatory long dip.

[136] At 154b, the *–e* in 'pane' (<OFr. *pan(n)e*) is etymological.

or where *clene* is preceded by another intensifier ('so') or function word, as in:

Þat were richely rayled	in his aray clene	(*SG* 163)
And he asoyled hym surely	and sette hym so clene	(*SG* 1883)
I halde þe polysed of þat ply3t	and pured as clene	(*SG* 2393)

Similarly, the selection from *ful ryche* or *ryche* is determined by the metre. Here again, *ful* serves to create a medial long dip:

Of bry3t golde, vpon silk bordes	barred **ful** ryche	(*SG* 159)
On botounz of þe bry3t grene	brayden **ful** ryche	(*SG* 220)
Of a broun bleeaunt	enbrauded **ful** ryche	(*SG* 879)
Gawayn gayþely at home	in gerez **ful** ryche	(*SG* 1470)

The intensifier does not occur where the long dip is present without it:

In a swoghe sylence	þur3 þe sale riche	(*SG* 243)
I wolde com to your counseyl	bifore your cort ryche	(*SG* 347)
As þou deles me to-day	bifore þis douþe ryche	(*SG* 397)
When he watz hasped in armes	his harnays watz ryche	(*SG* 590)

The distributional pattern of *(ful) ryche* at the line-final position strongly suggests that 'semlych' at 882b is trisyllabic:

And he sete in þat settle	semlych ryche	(*SG* 882)

At 288, either sounding of etymological *–e* in 'giserne' (<OFr. *guiserne*) or the insertion of *ful* before 'ryche' is required:

I schal gif hym of my gyft	þys giserne ryche	(*SG* 288)

In the case of line-ending *þik(e*, all the instances in *Sir Gawain* involve *ful* or *so*:

With a pyked palays	pyned **ful** þik	(*SG* 769)
Towres telded bytwene	trochet **ful** þik	(*SG* 795)
He rechated, and rode	þur3 ronez **ful** þyk	(*SG* 1466)

His felaȝes fallen hym to	þat fnasted **ful** þike	(*SG* 1702)
Fro þe swyre to þe swange	so sware and so þik	(*SG* 138)
Tortors and trulofez	entayled so þyk	(*SG* 612)
Among þe castel carnelez	clambred so þik	(*SG* 801)
For þat prynces of pris	depresed hym so þikke	(*SG* 1770)

The poem has five instances of *ful* + *hyȝe* at line-closure, where the intensifier, again, always serves to create a medial long dip:

When non wolde kepe hym with	carp he coȝed **ful** hyȝe	(*SG* 307)
He let no semblaunt be sene	bot sayde **ful** hyȝe	(*SG* 468)
Fro þe face of þe folde	to flyȝe **ful** hyȝe	(*SG* 524)
And innermore he behelde	þat halle **ful** hyȝe	(*SG* 794)
Thenne þe knyȝt con	calle **ful** hyȝe	(*SG* 2212)

The sounding of final *–es* in 'sayde', 'flyȝe', and 'calle'—all of which are grammatical—and in 'halle'[137] is unambiguously indicated by the above b-verses. Where *ful* is absent, as in—

On þe most on þe molde	on mesure hyghe	(*SG* 137)

—the required long dip is satisfied by a trisyllabic open-class word (here, with the sounding of etymological *–e* on 'mesure' (<OFr. *mesure*)), which bears the fist b-verse stress.

The following are other b-verses in the poem that involve the 'ful + adjective/adverb' construction at line-ending:

Talkkande bifore þe hyȝe table	of trifles **ful** hende	(*SG* 108)
And þou hatz redily rehersed	bi resoun **ful** trwe	(*SG* 392)
And hit lyfte vp þe yȝe-lyddez	and loked **ful** brode	(*SG* 446)
Þe forme to þe fynisment	foldez **ful** selden	(*SG* 499)
Schyre schedez þe rayn	in schowrez **ful** warme	(*SG* 506)
Þus in peryl and payne	and plytes **ful** harde	(*SG* 733)
Vpon bastel rouez	þat blenked **ful** quyte	(*SG* 799)

To lede a lortschyp in lee	of leudez **ful** gode	(*SG* 849)
Sone watz telded vp a tabil	on trestez **ful** fayre	(*SG* 884)
Boþe at mes and at mele	messes **ful** quaynt	(*SG* 999)
Þe freke ferde with defence	and feted **ful** fayre	(*SG* 1282)
Wyt ȝe wel, hit watz worth	wele **ful** hoge	(*SG* 1820)
And drof vche dale ful	of dryftes **ful** grete	(*SG* 2005)
Hit watz no lasse bi þat lace	þat lemed **ful** bryȝt	(*SG* 2226)

Again, a b-verse opening with a short or no dip and the head stave occupied by a disyllabic word are the constant features in the *ful*-involving b-verses. Considering all the evidence above, it is beyond doubt that the presence or absence of *ful* in the b-verse is determined by metrical requirements. This fact can also serve as corroborative evidence for a point that I have already made in the preceding discussion: the possible sounding of final *–e* in *–and(e*. The poem has five instances in which a last-stave adjective/adverb is immediately preceded by a present participle and a present participle only:

Þen grene aumayl on golde	glowande bryȝter	(*SG* 236)
A schelde and a scharp spere	schinande bryȝt	(*SG* 269)
Bende his bresed broȝez	blycande grene	(*SG* 305)
Þenne he carped to þe knyȝt	criande loude	(*SG* 1088)
Þe lady luflych com	laȝande swete	(*SG* 1757)

If the suppression of the final *–e* is to be assumed, these b-verses would be all unmetrical, lacking a long dip either before or after the first b-verse ictus. But I have argued in the previous section that *–and(e* is probably disyllabic when it is affixed to a monosyllabic stem and followed by a one-word continuant with ictus on its first syllable. Here, disyllabic *–ande* is also suggested by the *absence* of *ful* before the line-terminal adjective or adverb; for, as we have just seen, the *ful* + adverb/adjective construction at line-closure is constantly selected where a long medial dip would otherwise be wanting. It is therefore almost certain that the final *–e* in *–and(e* in the above b-verses has syllabic value. Only once does *ful* occur in such a position:

Þe alder he haylses	heldande **ful** lowe	(*SG* 972)

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[137] 'halle' (<OE. hall, f.) probably acquired final *–e*, as many OE feminine nouns did.

Here, 'ful' is metrically unnecessary, as 'heldande' would, like 'glowande' and 'laȝande' above, be trisyllabic with the absence of 'ful' (*heldande lowe*); so the intensifier here has an emphasising function, serving to indicate the profoundness of the obeisance Gawain makes to the 'older' woman. The presence of 'ful' makes the sounding of *–e* in '-ande' less likely, as the participle is followed by a two-, instead of one-, word continuant, which I have argued dictates monosyllabic pronunciation of *–and(e.*

The following b-verse is unmetrical as they stand, due to the lack of a long dip:

Warnez hym for þe wynter to wax **ful** rype (*SG* 522)

This b-verse should perhaps be emended to *to waxe ful rype*, with final *–e* for infinitive 'wax'.

Instances in *Cleanness* and *Patience* of *ful* + adjective/adverb at line-ending are listed in the appendices.[138] Their distributional patterns are in accord with those in *Sir Gawain.*

b) *Ful* occurring before the head stave of the b-verse

There are in the poem 14 instances of verse-opening *ful*, in which *ful* either contributes to the required long dip (7 instances) or constitutes a short dip (7 instances), the b-verses being all metrically correct as a consequence:

Boþe þe kynges sistersunes	and **ful** siker kniȝtes	(*SG* 111)
Dayntés dryuen þerwyth	of **ful** dere metes	(*SG* 121)
Þat bigly bote on þe broun	with **ful** brode hedez	(*SG* 1162)
Þe lede lay lurked	a **ful** longe quyle	(*SG* 1195)
And as ho stod, ho stonyed hym	wyth **ful** stor wordez	(*SG* 1291)
Techez hym to þe tayles	of **ful** tayt bestes	(*SG* 1377)
Þay bikende hym to Kryst	with **ful** colde sykyngez	(*SG* 1982)
Þe freke calde hit a fest	**ful** frely and ofte	(*SG* 894)
Then frayned þe freke	**ful** fayre at himseluen	(*SG* 1046)

Þat droȝ þe dor after hir	**ful** dernly and stylle	(*SG* 1188)
And ho hym ȝeldez aȝayn	**ful** ȝerne of hir wordez	(*SG* 1478)
Þaȝ he lowkez his liddez	**ful** lyttel he slepes	(*SG* 2007)
Þe place þat ȝe prece to	**ful** perelous is halden	(*SG* 2097)
For ho hatz dalt drwry	**ful** dere sumtyme	(*SG* 2449)

Ful as part of a long dip occurs where there is no dip or only a short dip between the head stave and the last stave, whereas *ful* as a short dip is always followed by a long medial dip. One could argue that verse-opening short-dip *ful*, though metrically and semantically unnecessary, serves to create the x/xx/x pattern, the most typical b-verse rhythm.[139]

Instances from *Cleanness* and *Patience*, which are placed in the appendices, follow the same pattern.[140]

4.4.2 *Ful* in standard a-verses

Let us now move on to standard a-verses and examine whether or not *ful* is there also exploited to meet metrical demands. I have argued that any standard a-verse, as a condition of metricality, must have at least one long dip either before or after the first a-verse ictus. In the following lines, *ful* seems to be metrically insignificant, since the a-verse would have a metrical long dip without it:

Ande rimed hym **ful** richely	and ryȝt hym to speke	(*SG* 308)
Þen haylsed he **ful** hendly	þo haþelez vchone	(*SG* 829)
Hurtez hem **ful** heterly	þer he forth hyȝez	(*SG* 1462)
Stelez out **ful** stilly	bi a strothe rande	(*SG* 1710)
Wreȝande hym **ful** weterly	with a wroth noyse	(*SG* 1706)
Ho bede hit hym **ful** bysily	and he hir bode wernes	(*SG* 1824)
Rased hym **ful** radly	out of þe rach mouþes	(*SG* 1907)
And couertorez **ful** curious	with comlych panez	(*SG* 855)
Vnder couertour **ful** clere	cortyned aboute	(*SG* 1181)

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[138] See 1 on pp. 319-21.

[139] I take 'perelous' (2097b) to be disyllabic, with the suppression of medial vowel before the liquid 'l', and 'dere' to be disyllabic with the sounding of etymological *–e* (<OE. *dēore*).

Similarly, the presence of *ful* is metrically irrelevant in the lines below, as it serves to create only a short central dip, while the obligatory long dip is satisfied at verse-opening:

Þat mony hert **ful** hiȝe	hef at her towches	(*SG* 120)
Þat oþer knyȝt **ful** comly	comended his dedez	(*SG* 1629)

Instances from *Cleanness* and *Patience* are listed in the appendices.[141]

However, there are also many instances in which *ful* is exploited to create a metrically required long dip. Below are the instances of pre-caesural *ful* + adjective, followed by those of pre-caesural *ful* + adverb and one instance of verse-opening *ful* + adjective:

Knyȝtez **ful** cortays	and comlych ladies	(*SG* 539)
Armed, **ful** aȝlez	in hert hit hym lykez	(*SG* 2335)
Justed **ful** jolilé	þise gentyle kniȝtes	(*SG* 42)
Þat glemed **ful** gayly	with mony golde frenges	(*SG* 598)
Rungen **ful** rychely	ryȝt as þay schulden	(*SG* 931)
Daunsed **ful** dreȝl	wyth dere carolez	(*SG* 1026)
Kysten **ful** comlyly	and kaȝten her leue	(*SG* 1118)
And set hir **ful** softly	on þe bed-syde	(*SG* 1193)
Hid hit **ful** holdely	þer he hit eft fonde	(*SG* 1875)
Gawayn **ful** gryndelly	with greme þenne sayde	(*SG* 2299)
And **ful** clere costez	þe clowdes of the welkyn	(*SG* 1696)

Line 915 is unmetrical—unless one assumes the sounding of the unetymological *–e* in 'segge' (<OE. *secg*)—and may therefore be corrupt:

Vch segge **ful** softly	sayde to his fere	(*SG* 915)

At 74, *ful* may also be metrically motivated, if one assumes disyllabic 'Guenore':

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[140] See 2 on pp. 321-2.
[141] See 3 on p. 322.

Whene Guenore, **ful** gay grayþed in þe myddes (*SG* 74)

The case is not so clear in the following a-verses, in which *ful* is immediately preceded by the present participle with monosyllabic stem, on which the first stress falls:

Strakande **ful** stoutly mony stif motez (*SG* 1364)
Strakande **ful** stoutly in hor store hornez (*SG* 1923)

As in line 972b ('heldande ful lowe') above, 'strakande' here is probably disyllabic, as it is followed by a two-word complement (i.e. 'ful stoutly'). These a-verses would be metrical without 'ful', since disyllabic *–and(e* can be assumed when the ending is affixed to a monosyllabic stem and followed by a one-word complement with ictus on its first syllable. The intensifier therefore here seems to be prompted by semantic rather than metrical reasons, having an emphasising function.

There are a pair of lines (from *Cleanness* and *Patience*) which aptly demonstrate the exploitation of *ful* for metrical purposes:

A lodesmon lyghtly lep under hachches (*P* 179)
Loth þenne **ful** ly3tly loke3 hym aboute (*C* 817)

These two have the same construction, subject-noun ('lodesmon'/'Loth') + adverbial 'lyghtly'. At *P* 179, the obligatory long dip is satisfied by the trisyllabic noun with stress on its first syllable. The monosyllabic noun, 'Loth', however, necessitates the insertion of *full*, which serves, together with another monosyllabic function word, 'þenne', to create the metrically required long dip.

Another telling pair of a-verses can be found at *C* 671 and *C* 797:

With þat þay ros vp radly as þay rayke schulde (*C* 671)
He ros vp **ful** radly and ran hem to mete (*C* 797)

Here again, the use of *ful* is dictated by the metre; *ful* is absent at line *C* 671 because a long dip occurs at verse-opening, and therefore there is *no need* to insert *ful*, whereas at *C* 797, *ful* is required to create a long dip, which is absent at verse-opening.

The following a-verses are unmetrical as they stand:

Debated busyly	aboute þo giftes	(*SG* 68)
And layte as lelly	til þou me, lude, fynde	(*SG* 449)

Line 68a, with the insertion of *ful* before 'busyly', would have the obligatory long dip. At Line 449a, emendation of 'as' to *also*, the disyllabic alternative to *as*,[142] would provide the a-verse with its required long dip.

Other instances from *Cleanness* and *Patience* of *ful* (in standard a-verses) serving to produce a metrically required long dip are listed in the appendices.[143]

In the following a-verses, a long dip occurs at verse opening. Ictus-bearing nouns are all disyllabic and followed by a monosyllabic or disyllabic adjective with stress on its first syllable. Here, *ful*, though metrically not *necessary*, serves to create the 'standard', or *preferred*, rhythm of a disyllabic interval:[144]

On mony bonkkes **ful** brode	Bretayn he settez	(*SG* 14)
Wyth mony baner **ful** bryȝt	þat þerbi henged	(*SG* 117)
Þer mony bellez **ful** bryȝt	of brende golde rungen	(*SG* 195)
Ayquere naylet **ful** nwe	for þat note ryched	(*SG* 599)
Til þat he neȝed **ful** neghe	into þe Norþe Walez	(*SG* 697)
Into a forest **ful** dep	þat ferly watz wylde	(*SG* 741)
And syþen garytez **ful** gaye[145]	gered bitwene	(*SG* 791)
Þenne watz Gawan **ful** glad	and gomenly he laȝed	(*SG* 1079)
With mony leude **ful** lyȝt	and lemande torches	(*SG* 1119)
Þat watz furred **ful** fyne	with fellez wel pured	(*SG* 1737)

If the sounding of the etymological *–e* in 'noyse' (<OFr. *noise*) is assumed, the following a-verse, too, has a standard disyllabic interval:

An oþer noyse **ful** newe[146]	neȝed biliue	(*SG* 132)

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[142] Adverbial *as* used in the correlative occurs sometimes spelled *also* or *als*: e.g. *C* 984 ('Also salt as ani se and so ho ȝet standeȝ'), *C* 1068 ('Þat euer is policed als playn as þe perle seluen'), *C* 1134 ('And polysed als playn as parchmen schauen'), *C* 1792 ('Now is a dogge also dere þat in a dych lygges'), in which *as* is omitted.

[143] See 4 on p. 323.

[144] For instances from *Cleanness* and *Patience*, see 5 on pp. 323-4.

[145] The inflectional schwa in 'garytez' would be syncopated after the unstressed syllable.

[146] *Noyse* is almost certainly disyllabic, since it occurs at the last stave (e.g. 'wyth a wrast noyce' 1423b, 'a wonder breme noyse' 2200b), thus serving to provide the verse with an unstressed ending, which is strictly observed in the Cotton Nero poems; see Putter and Stokes, 'Spelling', 77-96.

4.4.3 *Ful* in crowded a-verses

In the crowded a-verse, *ful* is almost always exploited to create a long dip between the word with the pre-caesural stress and the second of the two preceding open-class words, and thereby to indicate the two ictus positions. J. Turville-Petre convincingly demonstrates that stress on the second and third (normally) open-class words with consequent stress-subordination of the first open-class word (e.g. *(a)aa*, *(x)aa*, etc.) is the predominant stress-pattern in crowded a-verses, in which the verse-opening (or the prehead) often serves to absorb even an alliterating open-class word into an unstressed opening dip.[147] In the lines below, the first ictus thus falls on the second open-class word, stress-subordinating the first. Here are the examples from *Sir Gawain*:[148]

Ladies laȝed **ful** loude	þoȝ þay lost haden	(*SG* 69)
With blyþe blaunner **ful** bryȝt	and his hod boþe	(*SG* 155)
A ȝere ȝernes **ful** ȝerne	and ȝeldez neuer lyke	(*SG* 498)
Of hore okez **ful** hoge	a hundreth togeder	(*SG* 743)
Ryche robes **ful** rad	renkkez hym broȝten	(*SG* 862)
Gawan glydez **ful** gay	and gos þeder sone	(*SG* 935)
Þe snawe snitered **ful** snart[149]	þat snayped þe wylde	(*SG* 2003)
Þe leude lystened **ful** wel	þat leȝ in his bedde	(*SG* 2006)

The crowded a-verses below involve an adjective + noun combination:

A strayte cote *ful* **streȝt**	þat stek on his sides	(*SG* 152)
Dubbed wyth *ful* dere stonez	as þe dok lasted	(*SG* 193)

At 152, *ful* serves to create a long dip between 'strayte' and 'streȝt', on which ictus falls; however, if the sounding of etymological *–e* in 'cote' (<OFr. *cote*) is assumed,[150] ictus will then be borne by 'cote', 'strayte' being stress-subordinated and absorbed into

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[147] J. Turville-Petre, 324; T. Turville-Petre makes the same point regarding the prehead (see his 'Alliterative Revival', 55).

[148] Other instances from *Cleanness* and *Patience* can be found under 6 on p. 324.

[149] Here and in 'lystened' at 2006a, I assume the suppression of medial /e/ before liquid or nasal.

[150] Disyllabic pronunciation of 'cote' is possible in view of line 335b ('he droȝ doun his *cote*'), where the sounding of final *–e* (at line-ending) appears to be certain.

an opening dip. At 193, the presence of 'ful' might indicate monosyllabic pronunciation of 'dubbed', with the schwa in '-ed' being syncopated; otherwise, it does not seem to have any specific metrical function.

Nor does *ful* in the following crowded a-verse seem to be metrically motivated:

Þise oþer halowed hyghe, *ful* hyȝe, and hay, hay, cryed (*SG* 1445)

Unless the sounding of final *–e* in 'hyghe' is assumed,[151] ictus falls on the verb 'halowed', stress-subordinating 'hyghe'; and here, 'ful' is not an essential part of the long dip.

Cleanness has a telling pair of crowded a-verses. The first one is:

Þat hert honest and hol þat haþel he honoureȝ (*C* 594)

The spacing rule dictates ictus on the two adjectives, stress-subordinating the noun at verse-opening. At *C* 830a, a crowded a-verse has almost the same syntactic construction (i.e. a subject-/object-noun postmodified by two adjectives):

Þe gestes gay and *ful* glad of glam debonere (*C* 830)

Since the verses with the almost identical syntactic pattern are most likely to have the same stress pattern, it would be felt most natural to stress the two adjectives at *C* 830, too. And this is made possible only by the insertion 'ful'; for, monosyllabic 'gay' necessitates the metrical filler to ensure a long central dip between 'gay' and 'glad', so that ictus, with the application of the spacing rule, will fall on these adjectives. On the other hand, at 594a, the disyllabic 'honest', unlike the monosyllabic 'gay', makes the insertion of *ful* unnecessary, as it serves, together with the following conjunction, 'and', to create the long dip. Here, it is worth repeating again that the stress pattern that these verses have—i.e. ictus falling on the second and third open-class words with a long central dip, while the first open-class word at verse-opening being stress-subordinated and absorbed into the unstressed prehead—is the predominant stress pattern of the crowded a-verse. An interesting comparison can be made with line 283 in *Patience*:

Þough I be fol and fykel and falce of my hert (*P* 283)

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[151] *MED* does not give the etymology of *hiȝe*; it occurs spelled with/without final *–e*.

Here, the subject-noun, which is replaced by the personal pronoun 'I', is followed, again, by two adjectives with the conjunction 'and' between. As in *C* 830 and *C* 594 above, ictus falls on the two adjectives. But, as this is not a crowded verse, *ful* is not metrically necessary, with the required long dip being satisfied at verse-opening. Interestingly, however, if a long dip is *absent* at verse-opening, as in—

Was longe and *ful* large	and ever ilych sware	(*C*1386)

—*ful* is needed to create the obligatory long dip.

In this way, a close study of the distribution of *ful* in *Sir Gawain*, *Cleanness*, and *Patience* reveals that the use of the intensifier is often prompted by metrical exigencies in order (1) to produce an obligatory long dip either before or after the first stress in the b-verse and in the standard a-verse, and (2) to create the long central dip marking ictus position in crowded a-verses. I have also argued that, like *–ly/-lych(e* and *–and(e*, *ful* might also be useful in creating the 'standard' or *preferred* rhythm with a disyllabic interval between the stresses: that is, the intensifier might be exploited not only when the metre required, but also when it *preferred* it. Accordingly, the findings are all in accord not only with the b-verse metrical rules that Duggan formulated but also with those which I have been arguing are operative in standard a-verses and crowded a-verses.

CHAPTER V

THE RELATION OF THE METRE OF *SIR GAWAIN* TO THAT OF *CLEANNESS*, *PATIENCE*, *ST ERKENWALD*, *THE WARS OF ALEXANDER*, AND *THE DESTRUCTION OF TROY*

I will here study the above five 'control texts' from the following points of views and compare them with *Sir Gawain*:

(1) Non-*aa/ax* alliterative patterns (other than *aa/aa*);[1]
(2) The crowded a-verse with the *(a)ax* pattern, in which the pre-caesural stress falls on a non-alliterating open-class word with consequent stress-subordination of the first alliterating open-class word at verse-opening;
(3) The crowded a-verse with the *(a)aa* or *(a)ax* pattern in which the pre-caesural stress falls on a disyllabic or trisyllabic non-derivative adverb;
(4) The crowded a-verse with the *(a)aa* or *(a)ax* pattern in which the pre-caesural stress falls on a closed-class word;
(5) Adjective + noun combinations;
(6) Verb + derivative adverb combinations;
(7) 'Compound'-noun phrases;
(8) 'Unmetrical' a-verses (i.e. any a-verse without a long dip either before or after the initial stress);
(9) 'Unmetrical' b-verses (by Duggan's rules).

With regard to points 5, 8 and 9, *Sir Gawain* will also be included in the study. I scanned 2093 lines (1-1735, 4842-5200) of *WA* and the first 2046 lines of *DT*. I think the data is sufficient to allow one to demonstrate the general metrical features of the two poems, and also to compare them with *Sir Gawain* (2025 lines)[2] and *Cleanness* (1812 lines). Due to the relative shortness of *Patience* (531 lines) and *SE* (352 lines), it is difficult to know what significance to give to a metrical feature *not* shared by these poems; but one can demonstrate that some metrical features *do* occur in them.

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[1] I will list lines involving a crowded a-verse in which only one alliterating open-class word occurs (e.g . *C* 303a and *C* 520a below, which are both annotated as *a...x(x)*).
[2] The bobs and wheels are excluded from the count.

5.1 The non-*aa/ax* patterns

Sir Gawain has 186 lines (9.19%) in which non-*aa/ax* patterns (excluding *aa/aa*) occur.[3] Lines with these patterns are not attested in *DT* and *WA*, except for a very few cases in which sense and/or rhythm also fails. However, the non-*aa/ax* patterns are occasionally attested in the two other Cotton Nero poems and in *SE*. Some of such lines may be unauthorial, but it is worth emphasising that most of them have, except for their deviant alliterative patterns, nothing suspect in terms of sense and rhythm. *Cleanness* has 49 obvious instances (2.70%), *Patience* 11 (2.07%), and *SE* 12 (3.41%). Here are the examples from *Cleanness*:[4]

And for my hyȝez hem boȝt	to bowe haf I mester	(*C* 67)[5]
For, certez, þyse ilk renkez	þat me renayed habbe	(*C* 105)[6]
And syþen alle þyn oþer lymez	lapped ful clene	(*C* 175)
Me forþynkeȝ ful much	þat euer I mon made	(*C* 285)[7]
Sem soþly þat on	þat oþer hyȝt Cam	(*C* 299)
Þre hundred of cupydeȝ	þou holde to þe lenþe	(*C* 315)
Þe end of alle kynez flesch	þat on vrþe meues	(*C* 303)[8]
Bot my forwarde with þe	I festne on þis wyse	(*C* 327)
Now Noe, quoþ oure lorde,	art þou al redy	(*C* 345)
Of secounde monyth	þe seuenteþe day ryȝteȝ	(*C* 427)
On þe mounte of Ararach	of Armene hilles	(*C* 447)
How þe cheuetayn hym charged	þat þe kyst ȝemed	(*C* 464)[9]
Now, Noe, no more	nel I neuer wary	(*C* 513)[10]

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[3] *ax/ax* (*xa/ax*): 110 (5.43%); *ab/ab* (*ab/ba*) and its variants: 41 (2.02%); *aa/xa* and its variants: 27 (1.33%), *xa/aa* and *ax/aa*: 8 (0.40%); in total, 186 lines (9.19%) have non-*aa/ax* patterns, but this figure excludes 10 lines with *aa/(a)xx* (mute stave): 344, 987, 1268, 1296, 1380, 1422, 1964, 2053, 2325, 2446.

[4] Robert J. Menner lists the following lines as those with only one alliterating word in the first half-line: 105, 175, 315, 427, 770, 779, 958, 993, 1073, 1518, 1571, 1727, 1807; see Menner, ed., *Purity* (New Haven, 1920), lv-lvi.

[5] The emendation of 'hiȝez' to *burnes* (which restores the alliteration and also makes good sense) was suggested by Putter and Stokes; see 'Spelling', 81, n. 10.

[6] 'Renayed' was almost certainly disyllabic, with /e/ in the inflectional ending being syncopated.

[7] Here and at *C* 447, the lines scan *xa/aa* as they stand.

[8] Neither of the combination elements joins the line-internal alliteration; cf. *SG* 110 ('And Agrauayn a la dure mayn on þat oþer side sittes'), *SG* 454 ('Þe knyȝt of þe grene chapel men knowen me mony'), *SG* 1742 ('Ho comez withinne þe chambre dore and closes hit hir after').

[9] The line scans *aa/xx* as it stands.

[10] The line reads *ax/ax* unless alliteration between /n/ and /m/ is assumed; this is one of the very few instances (in the Cotton Nero poems) in which such alliteration needs to be assumed if the verse is to have the standard *aa/ax* pattern; see also *C* 1304 ('And Nabugodenoȝar makes much ioye') and *P* 332

As dysstrye al for manez synne	dayez of þis erþe	(*C* 520)
Ne þe nyzt, ne þe day,	ne þe newe zerez	(*C* 526)
Hit is eþe to leue	by þe last ende	(*C* 608)[11]
When he hade of hem syzt	he hyzez bylyue	(*C* 610)
Fro mony a brod day byfore	ho barayn ay had bene	(*C* 659)[12]
Bot, for I haf þis talke	tazt to non ille	(*C* 735)
Nay, zif þou zernez hit	zet zark I hem grace	(*C* 758)
Zet he cryed hym after	with careful steuen	(*C* 770)
And þere in longyng al nyzt	he lengez in wones	(*C* 779)
Abdama and Syboym	þise ceteis alle faure	(*C* 958)
Þe þre ledez þerin	Loth and his dezter	(*C* 993)[13]
And efte when he borne watz	in Beþelen þe ryche	(*C* 1073)
So clene watz his hondelyng	vche ordure hit schonied	(*C*1101)[14]
Bot er þay atwappe ne mozt	þe wach wythoute	(*C* 1205)
And zet Nabuzardan	nyl neuer stynt	(*C* 1261)
Now hatz Nabuzardan	nummen hit al samen	(*C* 1291)[15]
And Nabugodenozar	makes much ioye	(*C* 1304)
Of mony kyndes	of fele kyn hues	(*C* 1483)
And þenne arn dressed	dukez and prynces	(*C* 1518)[16]
And of my þreuenest lordez	þe þrydde he schal	(*C* 1571)
Outtaken bare two	and þenne he þe þrydde	(*C* 1573)[17]
He schal declar hit also	as hit on clay standes	(*C* 1618)
Baltazar vmbebrayde hym	and, Leue sir, he sayde	(*C* 1622)[18]
And whyle þat watz clezt	clos in his hert	(*C* 1655)
Mane, Techal, Phares	merked in þrynne	(*C* 1727)

('For þink þat mountes to nozt her mercy forsaken) below. Since, at *C* 1304, two *n*s in the a-verse are followed by *m* in the head stave of the b-verse, alliteration between these nasals might be permitted in the manuscript; cf. non-alliteration between /k/ and /g/, see 1.4 on p. 43 above.

[11] The line is *ab/ba* as it stands.

[12] The line may be scanned as *a(x)...x/aa* in which the b-verse has two alliterative stresses.

[13] Gollancz emended ('Þe þre ledez lent þerin') to give regular *aa/ax* alliteration; Andrew & Waldron follow Gollancz, but they adopted the word order 'þerin lent'.

[14] Andrew & Waldron follow Gollancz, who emended 'clene' to 'hende'.

[15] Stress on the two alliterating words ('Now' and 'Nebuzardan') would render the verse unmetrical (by my rule), lacking a long dip either before or after the first stress. At *C* 1261 and *C* 1291, 'Nabuzardan' probably has two stresses.

[16] Andrew & Waldron emended the a-verse to *And þenne derfly arn dressed* to give regualr *aa/ax* alliteration.

[17] The line is *aa/bb* as it stands.

[18] The line is *aa/xx* (or *aa/bb* with the first b-verse stress on 'sir') as it stands.

Of þat wynnelych lorde　　þat wonyes in heuen　　(*C* 1807)

Below are the lines which could be scanned as *aa/ax*, though such reading would be felt slightly forced:

Þenne þe burde byhynde　　þe dor for busmar laȝed　　(*C* 653)[19]
And I schal schape no more　　þo schalkkeȝ to helpe　　(*C* 762)
And be ryȝt such in vch a borȝe　　of body and of dedes　　(*C* 1061)
Nebiȝardan noȝt forþy　　nolde not spare　　(*C* 1245)

At *C* 653, the scansion indicated above requires the caesura to occur between the preposition and its complement; but the placement of the caesura after 'dor'—which would be felt syntactically more natural—will render the b-verse unmetrical, lacking its obligatory long dip. At *C* 762, one may stress 'schal' and 'schape' and regard the a-verse as *aa*; but the pre-caesural stress is more likely to fall on the adverb 'more', since it is a sense unit which is only peripherally related to the preceding verb 'schape' (i.e. it is not a complement of that verb), and thus cannot be absorbed into the post-stress dip before the caesura.[20] *C* 1061 would become *aa/ax* if one assumes the first a-verse stress to fall on 'be' rather than adjectival 'such', which I think is more likely to be stressed. At *C* 1245, the pre-caesural stress on the negative adverb 'noȝt' would render the a-verse *aa*, but since the conjunction 'forþy' forms an independent sense unit which has a peripheral relation to the whole clause, it is more likely that 'forþy' bears the pre-caesural stress.

The following a-verses have the regular *aa* only if stress is taken to fall on 'watȝ' rather than 'neuer' (or, in the case of *C* 1555a, 'on'):

Þat watȝ neuer þy won　　þat wroȝteȝ vus alle[21]　　(*C* 720)
Bot þer watȝ neuer on so wyse　　couþe on worde rede　　(*C* 1555)

And, at *C* 517,

And ay hatȝ ben and wyl be ȝet　　fro her barnage　　(*C* 517)

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[19] If one takes the caesura to come after 'dor', however, the b-verse lacks its obligatory long dip.
[20] For the caesura rule, see 2.8 above.
[21] Cf. *SG* 2321: 'Watz he neuer in þis world　　wyȝe half so blyþe', in which the first a-verse stress falls

the pre-caesural stress must fall on '3et', rather than 'be', because it is the last independent sense unit in the a-verse.

The line below would become *aa* only if stress falls on the pronouns rather than the following verb ('wat3'):

Bot er harme hem he wolde　　in haste of his yre　　(*C* 1503)

C 930 is difficult to scan, because stress on the verb ('wylt') would produce an a-verse with no alliterative stress:

With þose ilk þat þow wylt　　þat þrenge þe after　　(*C* 930)

I would take stress to fall on 'ilk' and 'wylt' and regard 'þose ilk' as forming an adjective + noun combination, the adjectival demonstrative 'þose' serving to provide alliteration, which would otherwise be lacking in the a-verse.[22] A similar instance is found at *C* 228:

On vche syde of þe worlde　　aywhere ilyche　　(*C* 228)

Again, I scan the line *(a)x...x/ax*, with stress in the a-verse falling on 'syde' and 'worlde'; while 'vche', the first combination element, serves to produce alliteration in the a-verse, which would otherwise have none. The line alliterates on vowels, since the first stress of the b-verse must fall, given elision between '-where' and 'i-', on the first, rather than the second, syllable of 'aywhere' in order to satisfy the requirement of a long dip.

In *Patience*, there are 11 lines (2.07%) with non-*aa/ax* alliterative patterns:

I com wyth þose tyþynges　　þay ta me bylyve　　(*P* 78)

Durst nowhere for ro3　　arest at þe bothem　　(*P* 144)

Er gete 3e no happe　　I hope for soþe　　(*P* 212)

To oure mercyable God　　on Moyses wyse　　(*P* 238)

Þa3 hit lyttel were hym wyth　　to wamel at his hert　　(*P* 300)

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on the negative adverb 'neuer' rather than 'Watz' at verse-opening.

[22] Cf. *SG* 332 (Þe stif mon hym before　stod vpon hy3t'), *SG* 2244 ('And I schulde at þis New 3ere 3eply þe quyte'), *SG* 2400 ('And 3e schal in þis New 3er　a3ayn to my wonez'), in which the only alliteration in the a-verse is provided by the unstressed combination element (i.e. 'stif', '3er(e)'); see also 3.1.4 above.

Lorde, to þe haf I cleped	in carez ful stronge	(*P* 305)
For þink þat mountes to noȝt	her mercy forsaken	(*P* 332)[23]
And alle þat lyvyes hereinne	lose þe swete	(*P* 364)
And wysched hit were in his kyth	þer he wony schulde	(*P* 462)
Þenne byþenk þe, mon,	if þe forþynk sore	(*P* 495)
For he þat is to rakel	to renden his cloþez	(*P* 526)

SE presents 12 instances (3.41%) of the *ax/ax* (*xa/ax*) pattern. The first six are:

Noȝt bot fife hundred ȝere	þer aghtene wontyd	(*SE* 208)
Alle menyd my dethe	þe more and the lasse	(*SE* 247)
Þagh I be unworthi	al wepand he sayde	(*SE* 122)
Mony one was þe busmare	boden hom bitwene	(*SE* 214)
Þen hummyd he þat þer lay	and his hedde waggyd	(*SE* 281)
And also be þou, bysshop,	þe bote of my sorowe	(*SE* 327)[24]

The other three instances are slightly controversial:

At London in Englond	noȝt full long sythen	(*SE* 1)
Þe byschop hym shope solemply	to synge þe hegh masse	(*SE* 129)
And exilid fro þat soper so	þat solempne fest	(*SE* 303)

Line 1a will become *aa* only if one assumes that the pre-caesural stress falls on the second, rather than the first, syllable of 'Englond'. At 129, the spacing rule dictates stress on the first syllable of 'byschop' and 'solemply', stress-subordinating 'shope'; this scansion will yield the *x(x)a* pattern (or *x(a)a* if *sh* and *s* alliterate).[25] Line 303a could be scanned as *aa* only if one assumes 'exilid' to alliterate on /s/ (/ek-si:/) rather than /ks/ (/e-ksi:/).

There are two lines with the *aa/xx* pattern:

þat ere was of Appolyn	is now of Saynt Petre	(*SE* 19)
Þurgh sum lant goste-lyfe	of hym þat al redes	(*SE* 192)

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[23] The line reads *(x)ax/ax* as it stands; unless one assumes alliteration between /n/ and /m/; see also *C* 513 ('Now, Noe, no more nel I neuer wary') and *C* 1304 ('And Nabugodenoȝar makes much ioye') on pp. 202-3 above.

[24] 'Be' may take alliterative stress, though I take 'also' to bear stress here.

[25] The *Gawain* poet, however, seems to treat *s* and *sch* as two distinct sounds; see 1.4.2 on pp. 44-5.

At 19b, one could perhaps argue that 'is' or 'of' is a mute stave, providing the required alliteration in the b-verse. *SE* 192 has been much emended and may therefore be corrupt.

The only example of the *aa/xa* pattern occurs at *SE* 328, where stress seems to fall on 'soule' and 'leuyd,' whose second syllable can be syncopated before the unstressed verse-final monosyllabic preposition:

> And þe relefe of þe lodely lures þat my soule has leuyd in (*SE* 328)

One may take stress to fall on 'leuyd' and 'in' in the b-verse, and thus regard the line as regular, with an unusually long—four-syllable—verse-opening dip. However, the distribution of doublet forms such as *on/vpon* suggests that the b-verse should not have a four-syllable dip.[26] Syntactic transposition (*that leuyd in has my soule*) would produce a metrical b-verse. As this is the only example of *aa/xa*, it is difficult to argue for the authenticity of this alliterative pattern in this poem.

5.2 Crowded a-verses with the *(a)ax* pattern with the pre-caesural stress on a *non*-alliterating open-class word

In crowded a-verses, the pre-caesural stress may fall on a non-alliterating open-class word, with consequent stress-subordination of the first alliterating open-class word at verse-opening. This is one of the most frequently found patterns in which disjunction between alliteration and stress takes place. This pattern occurs in the other two Cotton Nero poems, *SE*, *WA*, but *not* in *DT* (in which the pre-caesural stress *always* falls on an alliterating word except a single instance, which is discussed below). The complete, or nearly complete, absence of this alliterative pattern in *DT* is interesting, as it suggests that the *DT* poet is more conservative than the other poets concerned in the handling of the pre-caesural position. *Sir Gawain* has 28 instances (1.38%),[27] *Cleanness* 15 (0.83%), *Patience* 4 (0.75%), *SE* 4 (1.14%), and *WA* 12 (0.57%). I include in the list verses in which a verse-opening combination (adjective + noun or verb + derivative

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[26] See 4.1, especially, pp. 118-25.

[27] 67, 418, 485, 506, 575, 649, 844, 858, 956, 959, 1001, 1084, 1313, 1413, 1415, 1446, 1470, 1565, 1572, 1684, 2284, 2292, 2313, 2418, 2446, 2465, 2468, 2491.

adverb) has double alliteration. One may notice that the *(a)ax* pattern is associated with certain syntactical frames, most frequently with a noun phrase + prepositional phrase, as in:

Þe pure pyleres of **bras**	pourtrayd in golde	(*C* 1271)
Dere disches of **golde**	and dubleres fayre	(*C* 1279)
Þe aþel **a**uter of **brasse**	watȝ hade into place	(*C* 1443)
As mony **m**orteres of **wax**	merkked withoute	(*C* 1487)

The *(a)ax* pattern is also associated with a verb + adverb combination + a non-alliterating noun as object, and a noun post-modified by a following adjectival phrase:

Styfly **st**abled þe **rengne**	bi þe stronge dryȝtyn	(*C* 1652)
Stelen **st**ylly þe **toun**	er any steuen rysed	(*C* 1778)
A cofer **cl**osed of **tres**	clanlych planed	(*C* 310)
Þe trestes **t**ylt to þe **woȝe**	and þe table boþe	(*C* 832)
His myȝt metë to **G**oddes	he made with his wordes	(*C* 1662)[28]

Examples with other syntactic combinations are:

Bed **bl**ynne of þe **rayn**	hit batede as fast	(*C* 440)
Þat falleȝ formast in þe **ȝer**	and þe fyrst day	(*C* 494)
As lauce leueȝ of þe **boke**	þat lepes in twynne	(*C* 966)
Þat seuen syþe vch a **day**	asayled þe ȝates	(*C* 1188)
Kyppe **k**owpes in **honde**	kyngeȝ to serue	(*C* 1510)
Reche þe **r**est as hym **lyst**	he ros neuer þerafter	(*C* 1766)

From *Patience*, *SE*, and *WA* come:

Rys **r**adly, he **says**,	and rayke forth even	(*P* 65)
Þe pure **p**oplande **hourle**	playes on my heved	(*P* 319)
Þe verray **v**engaunce of **God**	schal voyde þis place	(*P* 370)

[28] Here, I am assuming the sounding of etymological *–e* in 'mete' (< OE. *gemǣte*).

Dropped dust on her **hede**	and dimly biso3ten	(*P* 375)
And chaungit **chevely** hor **nomes**	and chargit hom better	(*SE* 18)
Laddes **laften** hor **werke**	and lepen þiderwardes	(*SE* 61)
A meche **mantel** on **lofte**	with menyver furrit	(*SE* 81)
Þe bry3t **bourne** of þin **eghen**	my bapteme is worthyn	(*SE* 330)
Þe athelest **ane** of þe **werd**	and Anectanabus was hatten	(*WA* 40)
And 3apely 3arkid in his **hand**	a 3erd of a palme	(*WA* 114)
And seemly **sett** was in þe **third**	þe son and þe mone	(*WA* 281)
Now certayn, **sire**, sayd þe **qwene**,	selly me þinke	(*WA* 326)[29]
To þe chefe **chaiare** of þe **qwene**	he chese him belyue	(*WA* 493)
With grete **glesenande e3en**	grimly he lokis	(*WA* 603)
With lang **lates** of **yren**	þa he might lig in	(*WA* 756)
Þe noll of Nicollas þe **kyng**	he fra þe ne[k] partis	(*WA* 930)
A clene **croune** on his **hede**	clustird with gemmes	(*WA* 1102)
Þan metis him **myddis** þe **way**	was meruale to sene	(*WA1185*)
Þe pure **populande hurle**	passis it vmby	(*WA* 1277)
With riche **r[y]b[an]s** of **gold**	railed bi þe hemmes	(*WA* 1661)

5.3 Crowded a-verses with *(a)aa* or *(a)ax* with the pre-caesural stress on a disyllabic/trisyllabic non-derivative adverb

In crowded a-verses with *(a)ax*, the pre-caesural stress may fall on a disyllabic (or, very rarely, trisyllabic) adverb, which is normally non-alliterating. *Sir Gawain* has 45 such lines (2.22%), in which 12 have an alliterating adverb and 33 non-alliterating,[30] *Cleanness* 29 (1.60%; 7 alliterating/22 non-alliterating), *Patience* 5 (0.94%; 1a/4na), *SE* 6 (1.70%; 0a/6na), and *WA* 9 (0.91%; 4a/5na). Again, this metrical feature is *not* attested in *DT*. Following are the examples from each poem. The examples below share similar syntactic patterns, which are, most commonly, subject + verb/verb

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[29] I scan the a-verse as *(a)ax* rather than *(a)a(a)x*, as 'sayd' itself carries little semantic weight; alliteration on this word may well be accidental.

[30] 64, 73, 76, 112, 219, 401, 600, 795, 856, 981, 2325, 2517; 21, 121, 153, 217, 254, 289, 331, 480, 505, 530, 547, 570, 576, 880, 909, 933, 1155, 1142, 1306, 1325, 1459, 1583, 1610, 1634, 1649, 1701, 1741, 1910, 2029, 2071, 2174, 2514, 2523.

participle + adverbial, verb + object + adverbial, or adjective + noun (*or* verb + derivative adverb) + adverbial:

Anoþer **nayed also**	and nurned þis cawse	(*C* 65)
Summe **swymmed þeron**	þat saue himself trawed	(*C* 388)
Clowdeȝ **clustered bytwene**	kesten vp torres	(*C* 951)
Þe rayn **rueled adoun**	ridlande þikke	(*C* 953)
The clay that **clenges therby**	am corsyes strong	(*C* 1034)
Dere droȝen **þerto**	and vpon des metten	(*C* 1394)
Braunches **bredande þeron**	and bryddes þer soten	(*C* 1482)
Scoleres **skelten þeratte**	þe skyl for-to fynde	(*C* 1554)
Þe kyng **comaunded anon**	to cleþe þat wyse	(*C* 1741)
Wyrk **woneȝ þerinne**	for wylde and for tame	(*C* 311)
Haf **halleȝ þerinne**	and halkeȝ ful mony	(*C* 321)
And sette a **sakerfyse þeron**	of vch a ser kynde	(*C* 507)
And **brynge**ȝ butter **withal**	and by þe bred setteȝ	(*C* 636)
And dyȝt **drwry þerinne**	doole alþer-swettest	(*C* 699)
In þe **hyȝe hete þerof**	Abraham bideȝ	(C 604)
When **two truë togeder**	had tyȝed hemseluen	(*C* 702)
Þe **hote hunger withinne**	hert hem wel sarre	(*C* 1195)
And **dere Daniel also**	that was devine noble	(*C* 1302)
With **koynt carneles aboue**	coruen ful clene	(*C* 1382)
Troched toures bitwene	twenty spere lenthe	(*C* 1383)
Heȝe houses withinne	þe halle to hit med	(*C* 1391)
And **brode baneres þerbi**	blusnande of gold	(*C* 1404)
Lyfte logges þerouer	and on lofte coruen	(C 1407)
Þrwe þryftyly þeron	þo þre þerue-kakeȝ	(*C* 635)
Meuande mekely togeder	as myry men ȝonge	(*C* 783)
And **biker þrowen vmbeþour**	with overþwert palle	(*C* 1384)

Examples with other syntactic combinations:

Of teþe **tenfully togeder**	to teche hym be quoynt	(*C* 160)
Of fifty **fayre ouerþwert**	forme þe brede	(*C* 316)

Hare3, hertte3 **also**	to þe hy3e runnen	(*C* 391)

From the other poems come:

Jonas **joyned** watz **þerinne**	Jentyle prophete	(*P* 62)
Þe se sa3tled **þerwith**	as sone as ho mo3t	(*P* 232)
Þat drof hem dry3lych **adoun**	þe depe to serve	(*P* 235)
Sewed a sekke **þerabof**	and syked ful colde	(*P* 382)
Lys loltrande **þerinne**	lokande to toune	(*P* 458)
Þe mecul **mynster** **þerinne**	a mighty devel aght	(*SE* 27)
With gargeles **garnysht** **aboute**	alle of gray marbre	(*SE* 48)
Burgeys **boghit** **þerto**	bedels and othire	(*SE* 59)
Putten **prises** **þerto**	pinched one-under	(*SE* 70)
Syþen Jesus has **juggit** **today**	his joy to be schewyd	(*SE* 180)
And teres **trillyd** **adoun**	and on þe toumbe lighten	(*SE* 322)
Þan answers Anectanabus **onane**	sayd, Is þare o3t ellis	(*WA* 290)
Ouþire mete has **mendid** þe full **mekill**	as may I no3t trowe	(*WA* 464)
Bradis **banars** **abrade**	buskis to mete	(*WA* 897)
Girdis grimly **togedire**	greuously metis	(*WA* 919)
Bot wees **wi3tly** **within**	þe wallis ascendid	(*WA* 1154)
Outhire macches 3ow **manly** **þerto**	o[þi]r [mayn]ly dies	(*WA* 1157)
Stoken stifly **without**	with staplis and cheynes	(*WA* 1205)
Schot scharply **betwene**	scho[uri]s of dartis	(*WA* 1422)
A **blewe bleant** **obofe**	brad him al ouire	(*WA* 5039)

5.4 Crowded a-verses with *(a)aa* or *(a)ax* with the pre-caesural stress on a closed-class word

In some crowded a-verses with this pattern, the pre-caesural stress falls on a closed-class word (often signalled by inversion, and normally non-alliterating), with consequent subordination of the first alliterating open-class word at verse-opening.

Such verses are attested most frequently in *Sir Gawain* (22 times; 1.09%),[31] *Cleanness* (21; 1.16%)[32] and *SE* (5; 1.42%). It may be worth noting that, while *Patience*, as we may reasonably expect from such a short poem, has only two instances (0.38%), *SE*, which is even shorter, has five (1.42%). However, more significant is the fact that this metrical practice seems also to be known to the *WA* poet, though such lines are attested only 10 times in 2093 lines (0.48%). This figure suggests that the *Wars* poet is less ready than the *Gawain* poet and *SE* poet to exploit this rare metrical/syntactic pattern. Again, *DT* presents no example. I will first list instances from *Cleanness*, followed by *Patience*, *SE*, and *WA*:

Broȝten bachlereȝ hem **wyth**	þat þay by bonkeȝ metten	(*C* 86)
As wyȝe **wo** hym **withinne**	werp to hymseluen	(*C* 284)
Her wyueȝ walkeȝ hem **wyth**	and þe wylde after	(*C* 503)
Abraham heldeȝ hem **wyth**	hem to conueye	(*C* 678)
Luf-lowe hem **bytwene**	lasched so hote	(*C* 707)
And loȝe he louteȝ hem **to**	Loth, to þe grounde	(*C* 798)
No worldeȝ goud hit **wythinne**	bot wyndowande askes	(*C* 1048)
And speke **spitously** hem **to**	and spylt þerafter	(*C* 1220)
Ȝet take Torkye hem **wyth**	her tene hade ben little	(*C* 1232)
His barounes boȝed hym **to**	blyþe of his come	(*C* 1706)
Þy rengne rafte is þe **fro**	and raȝt is þe Perses	(*C* 1739)
He hates hellë no **more**	þen hem þat ar sowle	(*C* 168)[33]
After harde dayeȝ wern **out**	an hundreth and fyfte	(*C* 442)
Þe rauen raykeȝ hym **forth**	þat reches ful lyttel	(*C* 465)
Clerrer counseyl con I **non**	bot þat þou clene worþe	(*C* 1056)
Mane menes als **much**	as maynful Gode	(*C* 1730)
Sem soþly þat **on**	þat oþer hyȝt Cam	(*C* 299)[34]

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[31] Examples are: 221, 292, 328, 673, 716, 726, 816, 952, 1002, 1108, 1235, 1589, 1592, 1672, 1702, 1797, 1903, 1929, 2006, 2050, 2331, 2446.

[32] Cf. *C* 1124 ('Yet þe perle payres **not** whyle ho in pyese lasttes ') and *C* 1626 ('Of sapyence þi sawle **ful** soþes to schawe'), both of which read *a(a)x*; at *C* 1626a, I treat 'ful' as a closed-class word, though it is an adjective and therefore, technically, an open-class word; it seems to be treated, as here, virtually as a closed-class word, as in *C* 1599a ('His sawle is ful of syence')—in which 'ful' is non-alliterating—and *C* 1011a ('As a fornes ful of flot')—where ictus appears to fall on the other semantically heavier open-class words, regardless of the alliteration on 'ful'. At *C* 1626a, however, the pre-caesural position triggers ictus on 'ful'. 'Ful' also appears to take the pre-caesural stress at *SG* 2005 ('And drof vche dale ful of dryftes ful grete'); as in *C* 1626, the a-verse has the *a(a)x* pattern.

[33] I am assuming the sounding of final *–e* in 'hell' (<OE. *hell*, fem.) in view of the fact that many of the nouns that were feminine in OE acquired final *–e* during the Middle English period.

[34] The line scans *(a)ab/bx*.

He holly haldes hit his	and haue hit he wolde	(*C* 1140)
Lorde, loued he worþe	quoþ Loth, vpon erþe	(*C* 925)
Gart hym grattest to be	of gouernores alle	(*C* 1645)
Erne-hwed he watȝ	and al ouerbrawden	(*C* 1698)
Þe segge sesed not ȝet	bot sayde ever ilyche	(*P* 369)
Þe fayrest bynde hym abof	þat ever burne wyste	(*P* 444)
Wyȝt werkemen with þat	wenten þertill	(*SE* 69)
As riche revestid as he was	he rayked to þe toumbe	(*SE* 139)[35]
I hent harmes ful ofte	to hold hom to riȝt	(*SE* 232)
Þe bishop baythes hym ȝet	with bale at his hert	(*SE* 257)
Þagh men menskid him so	how hit myȝt worthe	(*SE* 258)
Ne ost ordand he nane	of na [athill] kniyȝtis	(*WA* 52)
Bot airis euen furth him ane	and entirs his chambre	(*WA* 53)
For vertu vailes noȝt all	if þou avaied worthe	(*WA* 103)
He toke traimmes him with	to tute in þe sternes	(*WA* 127)
Said it was sett to be so	he saȝe by his artis	(*WA* 522)
Blyssis blythly hym aboute	and a bridyll fyndez	(*WA* 789)
For wele wist þai þam nane	to wyn to þe cite	(*WA* 1271)[36]
Weris wondirly wele	werpis out stanes	(*WA* 1423)
Tilt torettis doun	toures on hepis	(*WA* 1541)
Sum with sensours and so	with siluiryn cheynes	(*WA* 1688)

5.5 Adjective + noun combinations

In Chapter III, I closely examined the adjective + noun combination in *Sir Gawain*, and then pointed out some of the major differences between the *Gawain* poet and the *DT* poet in their handling of the combinations, arguing that this poetic device is

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[35] Cf. *SG* 592 ('so harnayst as he watz he herkenez his masse'), in which the pre-caesural stress falls on 'watz' rather than 'he', though the latter could provide the second a-verse alliteration.

[36] Since 'wele' is a simple adverb and thus normally unstressed, this a-verse may perhaps be regarded as an instance of the *ax/ax* pattern, or as a suspect line.

practised by alliterative poets in different ways and with different effects.[37] In this section, I will compare the distribution and nature of combinations in the a-verse in all the poems concerned. In the process of scansion, I counted a minor adjective (*aune*, *uche*, *ilk*, *mony*, *other*, etc.) + noun as a combination element only when it alliterates or has phrasal stress. I also take combinations of genitive + noun, noun + noun, etc. as variant forms of the A + N combination, and thus treat them together. I will examine these variants in more detail in my discussion.

In the first 2046 lines of *DT*, the A + N combination occurs quite frequently (171 lines), both at verse-opening (79 lines) and at the pre-caesural position (92 lines). Both combination elements are often monosyllabic (eg 'just kyng' 374a, 'wise man' 576a, 'brode see' 1299a), though disyllabic elements are not uncommon, such as 'noble man' (1038a) and 'wale children' (1418a, 1727a). But there is no instance (except 'thowsaund tymes' at 555a) of pre-caesural combinations where both adjective and noun have two or more syllables—this is also true of the other poems, discounting instances which largely occur because a monosyllable becomes disyllabic by virtue of an inflectional ending.[38] The adjectives used in this poem are fairly traditional, drawing on (normally) monosyllabic stock adjectives such as *bright*, *clene*, *faire*, *grete*, *shire*, etc. As a result, the combination in *DT* is mostly predictable, lacking variety and imaginative force.

In *DT*, in fact, disjunction between stress and alliteration takes place *only* in the crowded a-verse involving a *verse-opening* combination, as in:[39]

With depe woundes and derfe	till all be dede euyn	(*DT* 183)
Stythe knightes and stoure	stert vp agayne	(*DT* 942)
A ȝonge knight and a ȝepe	ȝyneris of hert	(*DT* 1242)

Disjunction between alliteration and stress occurs in 28 out of 60 instances (46.67%) of verse-opening combinations with single alliteration. However, at the *pre-caesural* position, the combination *always* has *single* alliteration on the *adjective*, which is also

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[37] See 3.1.6 above.

[38] *Patience* and *Cleanness* have a few instances of a pre-caesural combination in which both adjective and noun have two or more syllables; see p 225-6 below.

[39] Stress on the non-alliterating noun appears to be certain in these cases, when one compares such lines as 1194a ('With stithe strokes and store') and 1330a ('Wyde woundes and wete'), which, unlike the cited lines, involve a verse-opening combination with *double* alliteration, but which have the same syntactic (combination + *and* + adjective) pattern as that of the a-verses cited; it is therefore reasonable to assume that the a-verses here and those in question have the same stress pattern (i.e. stress on the noun element followed by a long central dip before the pre-caesural stress); for possible disjunction between alliteration and stress in adjective + noun combinations, see also 3.1.3 above.

always accompanied by stress; in other words, stress and alliteration always coincide at the pre-caesural position. There are 92 combinations occurring at this position, and all but three comply with this pattern. But these three, too, are exceptions which are more apparent than real. One is a possible instance of a pre-caesural combination with double alliteration[40] and the other two are possible instances of disjunction between alliteration and stress in the pre-caesural combination. The first is found at 1382:

Wemen, wale childur and other weike pupull (*DT* 1382)

The spacing rule dictates stress on 'Wemen' and the non-alliterating noun element, 'childur', thus giving a verse scanning *a...(a)x*, in which disjunction between alliteration and stress takes place. However, considering other instances in the poem in which both alliteration and stress fall on the adjective, as in—

Wemyn and wale children vnto wo put (*DT* 1418)
Wyues and wale children þai away led (*DT* 1727)

—the a-verse in question should perhaps be emended to *Wemen and wale childur*, with the conjunction *and*, to give the same scansion (i.e. *a...a(x)*). The second possible instance of disjunction occurs at 1020, in which the adjective is unalliterated:

Getyn of þe same god in a goode tyme (*DT* 1020)

But here, the adjective is 'same'—a minor adjective, which, together with *all*, *awne*, *soche*, *bothe*, *oþer* or nouns used as a title (e.g. *sir*), can be treated as a closed-class word (and therefore not a adjective + noun combination element) unless it alliterates or has phrasal stress. Quite frequently, though, such minor adjectives are, in *DT*, alliterated, used as a combination element merely to satisfy alliterative demands. And this is especially true when they occur at the pre-caesural position.[41] It is therefore obvious that the combination is employed merely to include a non-alliterating open-class noun, and that the poet treats it as a single metrical unit.

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[40] See p. 216 below.

[41] 276a ('Þat after hym awne selfe'), 819a ('With Ercules and oþer mo'), 983a ('In Solas on soche wise'), 1122a ('Sothely, Sir kyng'), 1328a ('With batell on bothe halfes'), 1387a ('Euyn of his owne doughter'). It may be worth pointing out that the *DT* poet uses the combination of causative verb (e.g. let) + infinitive as if it were an A + N combination at 1424a ('Light harmes Let ouer-passe'); however, this is probably the poet's desperate effort to meet the alliterative demands rather than a variation on the A + N

Even more awkward is the poet's tendency to repeat verses or lines which include a rather perfunctory, colourless combination, as in:

Armet at all peses	abill to fight	(*DT* 943)
Armet at all peces	abull to fight	(*DT* 1164)

Similar lines occur at 181 ('Armyt at all peses able to were') and 1090 ('Armyn hom at all peces after anon'). At 855, 1087, and 1744, the same a-verse ('Armur and all thing') is repeated three times.[42]

Identical lines can be repeated even within the range of 20 lines, as with 'And assemblit his sad men on a soppe hole' (1289, 1309); these two lines are preceded by another similar line at 1277 ('With seuyn hundrithe sad men assemblit hym with'). The repetition suggests that the poet's main concern is to observe the most common verse type—i.e. a verse with a long central dip flanked by two alliterative stresses—rather than to diversify the rhythm and alliterative collocation.

It is worth noting that at the pre-caesural position it is almost always (except 1020a above) the minor adjectives that take the alliterative stress when such adjectives occur. The combination is therefore simply a means for the poet to achieve the second alliteration when the relevant noun does not provide it. He shows little interest in exploiting this metrical device for poetic purposes, and the want of artistic ambition is also evidenced by the fact that double alliteration is only sporadically attested in verse-opening combinations, occurring only 19 times out of 79 (24.05%), with *no instances* occurring at verse-ending, with only one apparent exception at 1102a:

And happet the herre hond	to haue at þe last	(*DT* 1102)

Here, 'herre hond' (= 'the upper hand, mastery') is spelled sometimes as 'herhond' (7075) or 'herrehond' (9571), and should perhaps therefore be treated as one word rather than an A + N combination with double alliteration. The almost complete absence of double alliteration at pre-caesura is one of the metrical features which differentiate *DT* from the other poems concerned, especially, from *Sir Gawain*.[43]

In *WA*, combinations are also quite common, occurring in 315 lines out of 2093

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combination.

[42] Compare also 177a ('Girde out the grete teth') and 940a ('Gyrd out the grete tethe').

[43] See table 1 on p. 251 below.

(15.05%). They occur at the pre-caesural position (227 times)[44] much more frequently than at verse opening (88 times).[45] Double alliteration is also frequent, occurring in 17.62% of the pre-caesural combinations (40 out of 227 instances) and 47.73% of the verse-opening combinations (42 out of 88 instances): these figures show that, although the *WA* poet, unlike the *DT* poet, does use double alliteration at the pre-caesural position, he tends to write a-verses with a heavier verse-opening. As in *DT*, verse-opening combinations sometimes show disjunction between alliteration and stress: they account for 63.04% of the total occurrence of a verse-opening combination with single alliteration (29 out of 46 instances). The more interesting fact, however, is that the pre-caesural combinations in *WA*, though occurring much more frequently (227 instances: 10.85%) than in *Sir Gawain* (145 instances: 7.16%), are in the majority of instances, in fact, combinations with *single* alliteration on the *adjective*: these account for 76.21% of the total occurrence (173 out of 227 instances of a pre-caesural combination). There are several reasons for this high figure. Firstly, the *Wars* poet, like the *DT* poet, tends, especially at pre-caesura, to use the combination simply as a metrical 'excuse' for a non-alliterating noun, and thus the same collocations occur to fulfil the demands of alliteration. This is particularly noticeable when the poet has to include proper nouns such as *Anectanabus* and *Amon*:[46]

Anectanabus bi his awyn nam (*WA* 79a)

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[44] Pre-caesural combinations with double alliteration (40 lines): 27, 157, 195, 336, 454, 496, 514, 726, 745, 790, 803, 810, 811, 832, 871, 877, 933, 943, 1006, 1049, 1077, 1111, 1126, 1150, 1186, 1210, 1363, 1553, 1597, 1727, 4857, 4918, 4976, 4992, 4994, 5004, 5090, 5095, 5159, 5175. Combinations with single alliteration on the adjective (173 lines): 26, 29, 38, 65, 70, 79, 92, 113, 141, 168, 185, 192, 197, 204, 225, 234, 275, 276, 288, 289, 294, 321, 329, 345, 351, 356, 362, 370, 375, 390, 398, 404, 412, 420, 427, 430, 436, 443, 447, 458, 466, 480, 487, 495, 520, 537, 550, 562, 573, 579, 584, 596, 601, 617, 618, 627, 630, 633, 652, 669, 697, 700, 701, 718, 729, 734, 741, 748, 751, 760, 762, 768, 778, 783, 784, 807, 830, 834, 882, 884, 886, 888, 899, 911, 935, 948, 994, 958, 997, 1014, 1016, 1024, 1029, 1034, 1068, 1073, 1092, 1120, 1124, 1141, 1144, 1148, 1183, 1192, 1193, 1197, 1203, 1206, 1212, 1232, 1236, 1246, 1249, 1250, 1257, 1276, 1286, 1292, 1325, 1333, 1348, 1350, 1373, 1431, 1448, 1473, 1491, 1498, 1501, 1565, 1573, 1602, 1665, 1685, 1694, 1713, 1722, 1723, 4844, 4874, 4940, 4943, 4965, 4974, 4979, 4980, 4986, 4991, 5000, 5009, 5011, 5021, 5027, 5040, 5043, 5082, 5092, 5117, 5122, 5123, 5130, 5131, 5135, 5137, 5145, 5150, 5157, 5162, 5163, 5165, 5177, 5191, 5196; those with single alliteration on the noun (14 lines): 61, 503, 511, 527, 594, 842, 917, 949, 1047, 1214, 1377, 1405, 1490, 4877.

[45] Verse-opening combinations with double alliteration (42 lines): 24, 40, 96, 126, 244, 247, 265, 270, 358, 389, 493, 554, 557, 570, 613, 756, 771, 820, 831, 1037, 1038, 1102, 1190, 1199, 1279, 1318, 1369, 1470, 1509, 1661, 1681, 4869, 4875, 4876, 4931, 4936, 5044, 5049, 5116, 5148, 5168, 5178; those with single alliteration (46 lines): 50, 170, 228, 242, 278, 306, 315, 344, 364, 370, 419, 426, 438, 448, 458, 479, 498, 529, 703, 744, 806, 849, 892, 964, 1008, 1166, 1167, 1208, 1237, 1238, 1282, 1312, 1342, 1552, 1599, 4860, 4862, 4864, 4947, 4953, 4962, 4997, 5006, 5020, 5098, 5107.

[46] Other examples are: *Anectanabus* ('A, athel qwene, quod Anectanabus' 242a, 'Athill qwene, quod Anectanabus' 306a), *Persy* ('Þe proude king of Persy' 50a, 'Þe proude king of Persee' 170a), *Messedone* ('Þat þe mode kynge of Messedone' 215a, 'Haile, modi qwene of Messidoyne' 228a).

Þan Anectanabus hire awyn clerke	(*WA* 398a)
Of Anectanabus, his awen sire	(*WA* 1249a)
Amon hire awyn god	(*WA* 345a)
Amon, his awen god	(*WA* 420a)
Amon þaire awen god	(*WA* 1183a)

In addition to the excessive use of *awen*, the poet is often driven to use *same* in adjective + noun combinations to provide a verse with alliteration, as in 288 ('Say me þe day and þe same ȝere').[47] As in *DT*, minor adjectives with alliterative stress tend to occur more frequently at pre-caesura than at verse-opening.

Secondly, many of the non-alliterating nouns are synonyms for 'person' such as *mon*, *kny3t*, *kyng*, *duke*, *sir*, *qwene*, *dame*, *child*, and *son*. For instance:

Þe stede þare þis stith man	strikis þis hert	(*WA* 1193)
Þus plenys þis prouud knyght	þe pyte of hys fader	(*WA* 729)
Þen ridis furth þe riche kynge	and remowed his ost	(*WA* 1573)
Þis herd hire þe hende quene	and hetirly scho dredis	(*WA* 669)
Þus led he furthe his leue child	late on ane euen	(*WA* 697)
Quare is þi werdis, my wale son,	þou wan of þis godis	(*WA* 1073)

This type of combinations accounts for 31.55% of the total occurrence (59 out of 187 instances of a pre-caesural combination with single alliteration).[48] The adjectives that are combined with those generic nouns are, as here, also stock adjectives such as *stith*, *proude*, *aþill*, *riche*, *hende*, *leue*, *wale*, *fair*, etc., which are all generalized terms of approval, lacking specific force and vividness.

Most significant is the fact that, though the poem has some instances of the *(a)ax* pattern, the treatment of the pre-caesural position is still mechanical in *Wars* by comparison with *Sir Gawain* (where the second ictus is also frequently occupied by non-alliterating words from open or closed classes). In *Sir Gawain* one rarely finds examples of minor adjectives which are used as a combination element only for the sake of the inclusion of the non-alliterating noun. Pre-caesural combinations involving

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[47] Cf. 344 ('Þe same ny3t in hire slep'), 356 ('Make þe to se þe same god'), 419 ('Þe same ny3t in his slepe'), 443 ('Þat sygnyfys þe same man'), 892 ('Þe same day at was sett'), 1208 ('Þe same ni3t in his slepe'); see also 741 ('selue'), 1192 ('þis'), 1232 ('quat'), 1333 ('mekill').

[48] 168, 185, 197, *234 (involves emendation), 289, 294, 351, 362, 427, 430, 443, 447, *458, 466, *537, 573, 584, 617, 618, 627, 669, 697, 701, 729, 734, 834, 884, 886, 935, 948, 994, 997, 1014, 1024, 1029, 1068, 1073, 1092, 1120, 1141, 1144, 1148, 1193, 1206, 1212, 1249, 1257, 1292, 1325, 1348, 1350, 1565,

non-alliterating *mon*, *knyȝt*, *wyf*, *kyng*, *quene*, and *son* account for only 12.50% of the total occurrence (14 out of 112 instances of a pre-caesural combination with single alliteration)[49] in contrast with 31.55% in *WA*. The frequent occurrence in *WA* of a pre-caesural combination with single alliteration suggests that the *Wars* poet, like the *DT* poet, relies fairly heavily on combinations (and on stock adjectives) to achieve the second alliterative stress. This mechanical use of the combination is further demonstrated by the fact that disjunction between alliteration and stress occurs, in *WA*, only in 12.83% (24 out of 187 instances) of the pre-caesural combinations with single alliteration—far less frequently than in *Sir Gawain*, in which instances of disjunction account for 33.93% (38 out of 112) of the total occurrence of single alliteration.

Sir Gawain has 122[50] instances of the verse-opening combination, of which 72 (59.02%) have double alliteration, while the pre-caesural combination with double alliteration accounts for 22.76% (33 out of 145 instances)[51] of the total occurrence. It is important to notice that, while the use of single alliteration in the combination is always motivated by metrical reasons (i.e. to provide alliteration for the sake of the insertion of the other non-alliterating element), that of double alliteration does not require such metrical reasons; in other words, double alliteration is purely ornamental, serving to make verses richer and more exuberant. The above figures suggest: (1) that a-verses in *Sir Gawain* contain more ornamental alliterating open-class words than those of *WA* (in which double alliteration occurs in 47.73% of the verse-opening combinations, and in 17.62% of the pre-caesural combinations), and (2) that the a-verses of *Sir Gawain*, as well as those of *WA*, tend to be heavier in verse-opening than at pre-caesura, where adjective and noun elements rarely both have two or more

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1573, 4986, 5009, 5092, 5117, 5123, 5165.

[49] 113, 381, 390, 467, 647, 681, 1064, 1179, 1492, 1657, 1961, 2300, 2351, 2493.

[50] Verse-opening combinations with double alliteration (72 lines): 8, 40, 47, 67, 73, 76, 77, 96, 109, 119, 153, 155, 167, 206, 209, 219, 353, 355, 470, 480, 492, 525, 545, 578, 591, 645, 649, 651, 679, 742, 793, 796, 803, 822, 832, 844, 847, 856, 862, 889, 902, 904, 952, 985, 1047, 1051, 1133, 1155, 1284, 1423, 1513, 1566, 1602, 1632, 1636, 1658, 1713, 1750, 1763, 1777, 1871, 1916, 1944, 2000, 2054, 2172, 2197, 2338, 2465, 2479, 2491, 2523. Those with single alliteration (50 lines): 9, 60, 64, 152, 159, 182, 236, 332, 334, 381, 417, 422, 427, 451, 570, 583, 656, 743, 776, 811, 812, 830, 962, 964, 1000, 1037, 1070, 1072, 1156, 1183, 1208, 1213, 1241, 1248, 1495, 1535, 1616, 1625, 1680, 1731, 1740, 1802, 1969, 2126, 2165, 2223, 2369, 2314, 2352, 2373.

[51] Pre-caesural combinations with double alliteration (33 lines): 13, 75, 115, 214, 305, 507, 510, 520, 560, 569, 684, 843, 853, 885, 1048, 1165, 1263, 1403, 1447, 1516, 1536, 1562, 1584, 1633, 1758, 1817, 1874, 1901, 2199, 2239, 2297, 2438, 2524. Those with single alliteration (112 lines): 39, 89, 108, 110, 113, 136, 159, 187, 193, 211, 220, 222, 250, 260, 269, 284, 304, 370, 381, 390, 404, 425, 426, 433, 446, 454, 458, 467, 482, 494, 647, 658, 663, 671, 681, 692, 771, 817, 820, 831, 854, 955, 958, 1003, 1022, 1029, 1064, 1140, 1159, 1179, 1201, 1222, 1264, 1290, 1324, 1331, 1336, 1338, 1356, 1359, 1378, 1382, 1387, 1388, 1444, 1464, 1467, 1492, 1495, 1526, 1552, 1573, 1628, 1630, 1657, 1673, 1674, 1675, 1709, 1742, 1832, 1904, 1961, 1963, 1967, 1968, 1998, 2035, 2073, 2149, 2162, 2183, 2244, 2252, 2260, 2294, 2300, 2312, 2319, 2346, 2351, 2364, 2365, 2399, 2400, 2417, 2430, 2440, 2443, 2458, 2487, 2493.

syllables. This tendency to 'crowded' opening can also be seen in the *Gawain*-poet's heavy use of verb + derivative adverb combinations at verse-opening, which I have discussed in Chapter III.[52]

A few more points should be made regarding the *Gawain*-poet's handling of the A + N combination. As I mentioned above, both *WA* and *Sir Gawain* have instances of pre-caesural combinations in which disjunction between alliteration and stress takes place, in contrast with *DT*, in which the pre-caesural stress and alliteration always coincide, falling almost invariably on the adjective (the exception being 1022a). While in *WA* such flexible use of the combination makes little contribution to the total significance of the verse in which it occurs—though it gives the poet an alternative means to achieve the second alliteration—in *Sir Gawain*, the poet seems frequently to exploit the combination to include a *non*-alliterating but contextually significant or pertinent *adjective*, as in:

So bisied him his **ȝong blod**	and his brayn wylde	(*SG* 89)
Chymbled ouer hir **blake chyn**	with chalkquyte vayles	(*SG* 958)
Bot styȝtel þe vpon **on strok**	and I schal stonde stylle	(*SG* 2252)
As perle bi the **quite pese**	is of prys more	(*SG* 2364)
How nome ȝe yowre **ryȝt nome**	and þenne no more	(*SG* 2443)

It is worth emphasising that, unlike generic nouns, the alliterating nouns in the above examples are all semantically precise; but here, it is these nouns that are exploited to insert the non-alliterating adjectives, which are contextually *even more* significant than the nouns, and on which the ictus, with the application of the spacing rule, falls. These non-alliterating adjectives cannot easily be replaced by other adjectives—they are an integral part of the narrative and contribute significantly to the point of lines. Line *SG* 2252a can be compared with the following examples from *Wynnere and Wastoure*, in which the same noun phrase ('one stroke') occurs, but in which 'one' possesses little contextual significance:

For if thay strike **one stroke**	stynte þay ne thynken	(*WW* 107)
Ones to strike **one stroke**	no stirre none nerre	(*WW* 127)
Þat if thay strike **one stroke**	stynt þay ne thynken	(*WW195*)

'One' in these instances is equivalent to the indefinite article, while the same word in

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[52] For verb + derivative adverb combinations, see 3.2.3 above.

SG bears more rhetorical force and contextual significance. Quite appropriately, the semantic lightness of 'one' in *WW* is reflected in the metre: the above a-verses would need the application of the spacing rule if 'one stroke' is to be treated as constituting an adjective + noun combination; but, given elision between 'strike' and 'one', there would be no long central dip between 'strike' and 'stroke', which will render these verses unmetrical by my rule. The more likely reading is, I think, to treat them simply as standard verses, with ictus falling on the two alliterating open-class words, and 'one' being an unstressed monosyllable constituting a short dip.[53] The comparison with the *WW* poet further demonstrates the *Gawain*-poet's effective handling of the pre-caesural combination as a means to create emphasis and subtlety in his narrative.

Another fine example of disjunction between alliteration and stress is found at *SG* 1673, in which the second a-verse stress falls on the non-alliterating adjective, which carries much of the sense in the first half-line:

> And sayde, As I am **trwe segge,** I siker my trawþe (*SG* 1673)

It is obvious that the combination is exploited to include 'trwe', one of the key words in this poem. Its contextual significance is also suggested by its being alliterated with last-stave 'trawþe' (thus *a...b(a)/ab*), which serves to compensate for its lack of alliterative prominence in the a-verse.[54] The alliterating 'segge' is introduced only for the purpose of inserting this key word, and the poet's exploitation of the combination here can be contrasted with that of many other alliterative poets who satisfy metre by a meaningless adjective because the following noun—which is also often a generic noun such as *mon*, *king*, and *kniȝt*—does not alliterate.

Secondly, combinations in *Sir Gawain* have variant forms: modifying the grammatical framework (adjective + noun), the poet creates not only the combination of genitive + noun, which is widely attested among other alliterative poems (though not as often as in the Cotton Nero poems), but also that of noun + noun (excluding those which

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[53] One may argue that, in view of *WW* 107,127, and 195, *SG* 2252a, too, can be treated as a standard a-verse with stress falling on the alliterating nouns, 'styȝtel' and 'strok'; but stress 'on' is supported by cumulative evidence: (1) 'on' has rhetorical stress due to its contextual significance (and therefore is a candidate for metrical ictus), (2) the spacing rule dictates ictus on 'on' and 'styȝtel' as there is a long dip between them, (3) there are many other instances in *Sir Gawain* of a pre-caesural combination in which disjunction between alliteration and stress (or ictus) takes place.

[54] Another instance of *a...b(a)/ab* (in which the stressed and contextually significant adjective (i.e. *b*) is alliterated with the last-stave word) is found at 2430 ('Þat wyl I welde wyth **guod wylle** not for þe wynne ***golde***'); there are also a few instances of *a...a(b)/ab* in which the *un*stressed, but semantically important *noun* is alliterated with the last-stave word: e.g. 2035 ('Þe gordel of þe **grene *silke*** þat gay wel ***bisemed***'), 663 ('Ryally wyth **red *golde*** vpon rede ***gowle***), etc.; see 1.2.5 on p 38 above.

can be regarded as pure compounds[55]), adjective + possessive noun + noun, and adjective + adjective (used as a noun). Here are some examples:

Þer hales in at þe halle dor	an aghlich mayster	(*SG* 136)
With luf-laȝyng a lyt	he layd hym bysyde	(*SG* 1777)
Leude, on Nw ȝerez lyȝt	longe bifore pryme	(*SG* 1675)[56]
And Salamon with fele sere	and Samson eftsonez	(*SG* 2417)[57]

The combination 'halle dor' at *G* 136 is also found at *C* 44 ('Hurled to þe halle dore and harde þeroute schowued'), and its variant, 'halle flor', at *C* 1397 ('Þenne watȝ alle þe hall flor hiled with knyȝtes'). 'Halle dor' and 'halle flor' do not sound especially distinctive or imaginative. But the following variation on it from *Patience* must have appealed to the ear of a medieval audience familiar with such usages in alliterative poems:

As mote in at a munster dor	so mukel wern his chawlez	(*P* 268)

Similarly, noun + noun combinations like 'heven-kyng' (*P* 257) may not sound so striking, but some others—

Her bagges and her feþer-beddes	and her bryȝt wedes	(*P* 158)
Bed me bilyve my bale-stour	and bryng me on ende	(*P* 426)
Slypped upon a sloumbe-selepe	and sloberande he routes	(*P* 186)
He slydez on a sloumbe-slep	sloghe under leves	(*P* 466)

—are rather more unpredictable and unforced; sense and metre would be satisfied by only one of the elements (e.g. '-beddes', 'bale-'), but the other adds pictorial force or

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[55] It is sometimes difficult to determine whether a given noun + noun phrase (e.g. *godmon*, *dayliȝt*) should be treated as a pure compound (i.e. as one word) or a noun + noun combination constituting a single metrical unit; the judgement can affect scansion, because if such a phrase is treated as a combination, the a-verse in which it occurs should be regarded as a crowded one (i.e. being subject to the spacing rule); if not, the verse should then be treated as a standard one; a-verses involving such phrases normally accord with the spacing rule, but there are a few instances in which noun + noun seems to be treated as one word, as the spacing rule would render the verse unmetrical because it would have only a short or no central dip; see the discussion on pp. 223-4 below.

[56] Cf. 1968a ('To dele on Nw ȝerez day') and 1022a ('Þe ioye of sayn Jonez day'), though *sayn* is here an attributive title noun and not an adjective.

[57] Unlike *mony*, *fele* normally carries alliteration and sometimes takes even stress (e.g. *SG* 428a 'Þat fele hit foyned wyth her fete', *SG* 1566a 'So felle flonez þer flete', *SG* 890b 'and fele kynn fischez').

semantic density. It may be worth emphasising that *DT* has no instance of any of the above-mentioned variants, except a very few instances of genitive + noun combinations (*DT* 1254, 1283, 1420). And in all these cases, the alliterative stress falls, again, on the first element, i.e. the genitive. The same is more or less true of *WA*, though the poet seems slightly more confident in his use of the variant combinations. Genitive + noun occurs only 6 times:

A lyons heuyd was on loft	louely coruyn	(*WA* 426)
To þe lyon hede, quod þe lede,	þen licken I on first	(*WA* 438)
To consaile of þis kyng son	how þai him call suld	(*WA* 618)
For it come noȝt a kyng son	ȝe knaw wele, to sytt	(*WA* 627)
For oþer mete þan manys flesche	mouthed he neuer	(*WA* 748)
I swere þe be my syre saule	and by his selfe pite	(*WA* 877)

Interestingly, disjunction between stress and alliteration takes place only in the verse-opening combinations (i.e. lines 426 and 438, in which stress falls on the non-alliterating noun, 'hede'). At the pre-caesural position, stress always falls on the adjective, which is also accompanied by alliteration.

In *WA*, noun + noun combinations are found more frequently—once at verse-opening and 13 times at pre-caesura—but they are mostly common ones:

Þonere-þrastis ware þra	þristid þe welkyn	(*WA* 554)
Of Articus the a[x]ill-tre	airis and oþire	(*WA* 29)
Did on him his dragon-hame	and drafe þurȝe þe sale	(*WA* 487)
As blesenand as bale-fyre	and blake as þe hell	(*WA* 562)
So carez he in þe castell-ȝarde	and comes on a day	(*WA* 768)
Cleopatras a knafe-child	consayue sall and bere	(*WA* 958)
Of childire all in [c]halk-quyte	chosen out a hundreth	(*WA* 1685)
Dom as a dore-nayle	and defe was he baþe	(*WA* 4874)
A blason as a berne-dure	þat all þe body schildis	(*WA* 4979)
Soþly, sire, þe son-tree	said þe segge þan	(*WA* 5135)
And mast-quat ay þe mone-tree	þurȝe miȝt of hire kynde	(*WA* 5137)
Þan schogs hire þe son-tree	and schoke hire schire leues	(*WA* 5145)
So maideux, quod þe mone-tree	þi meere bees na langir	(*WA* 5150)
Sire, soþely, said þe son-tree	if I þe soþe neuened	(*WA* 5157)

Again, the pre-caesural stress falls, in all but 554 above, always on the first noun element, which is also accompanied by alliteration. Equally importantly, all pre-caesural combinations have a monosyllable as their second element, and nearly all of them have a monosyllabic first element as well. For this reason, noun + noun combinations in *WA* are felt more like one word rather than two separate elements constituting one metrical unit; combinations such as 'bent-fild' and 'castell-ȝarde' have little density, as opposed to combinations such as 'sloumbe-slep' and 'munster dor' in *Patience*. In fact, there are a few cases in which noun + noun combinations seem to be treated as a pure compound (i.e. one word) rather than a combination consisting of two elements. For instance:

Intill a brade bent-fild	and bildid vp his tentis	(*WA* 4891)
Þat was þe proud playn-fild	I proued ȝow before	(*WA* 5185)

These a-verses need the application of the spacing rule, if 'bent-fild' and 'playn-fild' are to be treated as forming a noun + noun combination in a crowded a-verse. But this would render these verses unmetrical; for the pre-caesural stress must fall on either one of the two noun elements, and whichever element bears the pre-caesural stress, there would be only a short dip or no dip between the element that carries the pre-caesural stress and the first open-class word (i.e. 'brade' and 'proud') at verse-opening.[58] These a-verses should therefore be treated as *standard* ones, in which stress falls on the two alliterating syllables, with the obligatory long dip occurring at verse-opening. One could argue that the *Wars* poet handles noun + noun combinations differently from other alliterative poets by treating them as one word. But cases like those above suggest that some common noun + noun combinations (e.g. *daylight*, *sistersunes*, etc.) may be better treated as one word in other alliterative poems as well.

In *Sir Gawain*, disjunction between alliteration and stress also occurs in these variant combinations. Genitive + noun occurs 14 times in the a-verse,[59] and noun + noun 14 times.[60] In the former combinations, disjunction between alliteration and stress takes

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[58] See also *WA* 392 ('Qwen þe day-raw rase he rysis belyfe') and *WA* 5181 ('Sone as þe day-rawe rase he risis vp belyue'), in which 'day-raw' seems to be treated as one word for the reason stated above.

[59] 113, 370, 692, 1022, 1048, 1064, 1616, 1675, 1904, 1968, 2149, 2223, 2465, 2523.

[60] 67a ('ȝeres-ȝiftes'),136a ('halle dor'), 260a ('stel-gere'), 446a ('yȝe-lyddez'), 458a ('hal dor'), 647a ('heuen-quene'), 671a ('ston-fyr'), 1140a ('knel dore'), 1201a ('yȝe-lyddez'), 1336a ('wynt-hole'), 1777a ('luf-laȝyng'), 1874a ('luf-lace'), 2346a ('rof-sore'), 2438a ('luf-lace'); I discount 'sistersunes' (111a), 'bent-felde' (1136a), 'daylyȝt' (1137a, 1365a,), 'gryndelston' (2202a), 'godmon' (1029a, etc.), and treat them as one word.

place 6 times (42.86%).[61] In the latter combinations, the disjunction occurs twice (14.29%).[62]

Before I move on to *St Erkenwald*, I will briefly summarise the general features of adjective + noun combinations in the other two Cotton Nero poems, *Cleanness* and *Patience*. *Cleanness* has 92[63] instances of the verse-opening combination, of which 58 (63.04%) have double alliteration, while the pre-caesural combination with double alliteration accounts for 30 instances out of the total occurrence of 116 instances (25.86%).[64] Disjunction between alliteration and stress is found in 13 out of 34 instances (38.24%) of the verse-opening combinations with single alliteration, and 31 out of 86 instances (36.05%) of those at the pre-caesural position.

In *Patience*, verse-opening combinations occur 27 times in 531 lines (5.08%),[65] 16 of which involve double alliteration (59.26%). 34 lines out of 531 lines (6.40%)[66] have pre-caesural combinations, only 6 of which involve double alliteration (17.65%). Out of 28 pre-caesural combinations with single alliteration, disjunction between alliteration and stress occurs 9 times (32.14%).

It is not uncommon that, in verse-opening combinations, both elements have a disyllabic stem, as in 'As lyttel wonder hit watz yif he wo dreyed' (*P* 256) and 'With hatel anger and hot heterly he callez' (*P* 481).[67] Anomalously, however, this type of combination occurs, in *Patience*, even at the *pre-caesural* position:

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[61] i.e. 1675a ('luede, on Nw 3erez ly3t'), 1968a ('to dele on Nw 3erez day'); see also 113a, 370a, 1616a, and 2223a.

[62] i.e. 647a ('þat þe hende heuen-quene') and 1201a ('and vnlouked his y3e-lyddez').

[63] Verse-opening combinations with double alliteration (58 lines): 3, 42, 156, 177, 256, 342, 385, 499, 512, 533, 540, 601, 604, 637, 640, 660, 702, 707, 771, 789, 793, 839, 850, 947, 954, 987, 1056, 1150, 1164, 1188, 1189, 1190, 1204, 1207, 1209, 1210, 1271, 1279, 1302, 1341, 1382, 1383, 1391, 1404, 1407, 1443, 1458, 1487, 1509, 1540, 1593, 1627, 1676, 1686, 1716, 1746, 1772, 1794; those with single alliteration (34 lines): 40, 119, 226, 228, 350, 353, 403, 426, 429, 442, 625, 659, 689, 761, 837, 838, 881, 930, 950, 963, 993, 1015, 1048, 1076, 1096, 1192, 1221, 1402, 1444, 1610, 1619, 1642, 1691, 1734.

[64] Pre-caesural combinations with double alliteration (30 lines): 24, 52, 174, 214, 368, 380, 400, 416, 419, 462, 535, 595, 634, 697, 714, 765, 801, 862, 887, 983, 1050, 1182, 1282, 1379, 1514, 1543, 1680, 1783, 1804, 1014; those with single alliteration (86 lines): 11, 42, 44, 50, 58, 112, 115, 138, 180, 222, 226, 331, 332, 361, 364, 369, 379, 390, 415, 425, 428, 445, 472, 481, 493, 505, 520* (emended), 524, 542, 575, 602, 622, 639, 719, 784, 791, 803, 807, 836, 842, 893, 896, 927, 946, 965, 969, 976, 977, 990, 1026, 1044, 1053, 1098, 1162, 1184, 1203, 1222, 1278, 1286, 1321, 1342, 1348, 1354, 1364, 1378, 1397, 1398, 1418, 1453, 1506, 1522, 1545, 1564, 1569, 1591, 1600, 1637, 1638, 1660, 1673, 1719, 1742, 1744, 1760, 1776, 1799.

[65] Verse-opening combinations with double alliteration (16 lines): 2, 51, 63, 107, 119, 138, 139, 192, 234, 302, 358, 370, 373, 478, 481, 512; those with single alliteration (11 lines): 156, 256, 294, 309, 320, 359, 419, 444, 455, 476, 510.

[66] Pre-caesural combinations with double alliteration (6 lines): 141, 186, 422, 434, 450, 466; those with single alliteration (28 lines): 38, 59, 98, 105, 106, 108, 136, 137, 150, 152, 155, 158, 221, 258, 268, 294, 308, 345, 412, 426, 438, 441, 451, 456, 506, 507, 524, 531 (of these, disjunction between alliteration and stress takes place at 38, 59, 150, 158, 412, 441, 456, 524, 531).

[67] See also *P* 370: 'Þe verray vengaunce of God schal voyde þis place'.

Scopen out þe scaþel water þat fayn scape wolde (*P* 155)

Other than this single instance in *Patience*, no instance is attested in the poems concerned,[68] except for the following three instances in *Cleanness*:

Þat made þe mukel mangerye to marie his here dere (*C* 52)
To dryȝ her delful deystyne and dyȝen alle samen (*C* 400)
Mourkenes þe mery weder and þe myst dryues (*C* 1760)

At *C* 52 and *C* 400, the pre-caesural stress falls, with the application of the spacing rule, on the second alliterating element (i.e. noun).

With this point apart, combinations in *Patience* and *Cleanness* share with *Sir Gawain* the same metrical features.

Adjective + noun combinations in *St Erkenwald*

Consistent with the fact that *SE* was once attributed to the *Gawain* poet is the closeness of its metre to that of the Cotton Nero poems. In *SE*, the non-*aa/ax* patterns seem to be allowed occasionally—if not as freely as in *Sir Gawain*—and its syntactic patterns in which metre is realised are as varied as those of the Cotton Nero poems.[69] But there is at least one significant stylistic difference between *SE* and the Cotton Nero poems: the poets' handling of the combinations. In 352 lines of *SE*, verse-opening combinations occur in 20 lines (5.68%), in 8 of which a combination has single alliteration (40%). Of these 8 instances of single alliteration, 3 show coincidence between alliteration and stress (37.5%):

Ne no monnes counsell my cloth has kepyd unwemmyd (*SE* 266)
Bot þe riche kyng of reson þat riȝt ever alowes (*SE* 267)
By Goddes leuë, as longe as I myȝt lacche water (*SE* 316)[70]

and the other 5 instances of single alliteration show disjunction between alliteration and

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[68] *DT* and *WA*, in particular, have a strong tendency to have a combination of *monosyllabic* elements at the pre-caesural position.
[69] See 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 above and 5.6, and 5.7 below.

stress (62.5%):

Til Saynt Austyn into Sandewich	was send fro þhe pope	(*SE* 12)[71]
Harde stones for to hew	with eggit toles	(*SE* 40)
Þe derke nyȝt overdrofe	and day-belle ronge	(*SE* 117)
Mynster-dores were makyd opon	quen matens were songen	(*SE* 128)[72]
Of Spiritus Domini for his spede	on sutile wise	(*SE* 132)

Out of 20 instances of verse-opening combinations, double alliteration occurs 12 times (60%):

Þe mecul mynster þerinne	a maghty devel aght	(*SE* 27)
Wyȝt werkemen with þat	wenten þertill	(*SE* 69)
A meche mantel on lofte	with menyver furrit	(*SE* 81)
With ronke rode as þe rose	and two rede lippes	(*SE* 91)
Bot summe segge couthë say	þat he hym sene hade	(*SE* 100)[73]
With queme questis of þe quere	with ful quaynt notes	(*SE* 133)
Þe briȝt body in þe burynes	brayed a litell	(*SE* 190)
The bolde Breton Sir Belyn	Sir Berynge was his brothire	(*SE* 213)
Ne fals favour to my fader	þagh fell hym be hongyt	(*SE* 244)
Maȝty maker of men	thi myghtes are grete	(*SE* 283)
Þe bryȝt bourne of þin eghen	my bapteme is worthyn	(*SE* 330)
Meche mournyng and myrthe	was mellyd togeder	(*SE* 350)

Again, all the a-verses above have the signalling long central dip between the second alliterating combination element—i.e. the noun—and the non-combination element bearing the pre-caesural stress.

Out of 352 lines, 39 lines (11.08%) have a pre-caesural combination, 29 of which

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[70] Hiatus can be assumed between 'leue' and 'as', there being a syntactic break at this point.

[71] Contrast 'Syttes semely in þe sege of Saynt Paule mynster' (*SE* 35), where the title noun 'saynt' bears the first b-verse stress; in view of line 113b ('kydde of Saynt Paule')—in which disyllabic pronunciation of line-terminal 'Paule' appears to be certain, 'Paule' here, too, can be assumed to be disyllabic.

[72] The pre-caesural stress falls on 'makyd', 'opon' being stress-subordinated and absorbed into the post-stress dip before the caesura (as it is syntactically very closely linked to the causative verb, 'makyd'); verb + adjective can perhaps, as here, be treated as a combination forming one metrical unit; cf. *WA* 1649 ('On ilkä way wid open werped he þe ȝatis') in which adverb + adjective ('wide open') seems to be treated as a combination.

[73] The sounding of grammatical *–e* in 'couthe' is here assumed.

involve single alliteration (74.36%). In 23 of the 29 instances of single alliteration (79.31%), alliteration and stress coincide. First listed are crowded a-verses with *a...a(x)*, followed by those with *a...(x)a*:

Þen prechyd he here þe pure faythe	and plantyd the trouthe	(*SE* 13)
And clansyd hom in Cristes nome	and kyrkes hom callid	(*SE* 16)
Þe metropol and þe mayster-toun	hit evermore has bene	(*SE* 26)
Araide on a riche wise	in riall wedes	(*SE* 77)
In confirmyng þi Cristen faith	fulsen me to kenne	(*SE* 124)
An ansuare of þe Holy Goste	and afterwarde hit dawid	(*SE* 127)
Þe dene of þe dere place	devysit al on fyrst	(*SE* 144)
To sytte upon sayd causes	þis cité I ȝemyd	(*SE* 202)
In þe regne of þe riche kyng	þat rewlit us þen	(*SE* 212)
Dere sir, quod þe dede body,	devyse þe I thenke	(*SE* 225)
I justifiet þis joly toun	on gentil wise	(*SE* 229)
Quat wan we with oure wele-dede	þat wroghtyn ay riȝt	(*SE* 301)
Þus dulfully þis ded body	deuisyt hit sorowe	(*SE* 309)
I folwe þe in þe Fader nome	and his fre Childes	(*SE* 318)
Now herid be þou, hegh God,	and þi hende Moder	(*SE* 325)
And blissid be þat blisful houre	þat ho the bere in	(*SE* 326)
I heere þerof my hegh God	and also þe, bysshop	(*SE* 339)
Bot sodenly his swete chere	swyndid and faylid	(*SE* 342)
Þurgh sum lant goste-lyfe	of hym þat al redes	(*SE* 192)
And ever in fourme of gode faithe	more þen fourty wynter	(*SE* 230)
For to dresse a wrang dome	no day of my lyve	(*SE* 236)
Þagh had bene my fader bone	I bede hym no wranges	(*SE* 243)
How hit myȝt lye by monnes lore	and last so longe	(*SE* 264)

Disjunction between alliteration and stress occurs in the following a-verses (scanned as *a...x(a)*) in which the pre-caesural stress falls on the attributive, which is non-alliterating:

Bot pyne wos with þe grete prece	þat passyd hym after	(*SE* 141)
Lyftand up his egh-lyddes	he loused such wordes	(*SE* 178)
Non gete me fro þe hegh gate	to glent out of ryȝt	(*SE* 241)

And cast vpon þi faire cors and carpe þes wordes (*SE* 317)

At 47a, the spacing rule dictates stress on the non-alliterating noun, stress-subordinating the alliterating adjective (i.e. *a...(a)x*):

Hit was a throgh of thykke ston thryvandly hewen (*SE* 47)

A similar case is found at 224a, which is, however, slightly problematic:

And hades no londe of lege men ne life ne lym aghtes (*SE* 224)

If 'lege men' is regarded as constituting an adjective + noun combination, the pre-caesural stress must fall on the non-alliterating noun element ('men') to produce the obligatory long central dip. However, *lege man/men* is sometimes written as one word[74] and so entered in the *Middle English Dictionary*. Thus, this a-verse should perhaps be taken as a standard verse with stress on the two alliterating words, 'londe' and 'lege'.

Out of 39 instances of a pre-caesural combination, double alliteration occurs 10 times (25.64%):

And mony a mesters mon	of maners dyverse	(*SE* 60)
Þe maire with mony maȝti men	and macers before hym	(*SE* 143)
Bot quen matyd is monnes myȝt	and his mynde passyd	(*SE* 163)
Þai coronyd me þe kidde kynge	of kene justises	(*SE* 254)
Quen þou herghdes hell-hole	and hentes hom þeroute	(*SE* 291)
Dwynande in þe derke deth	þat dyȝt us oure fader	(*SE* 294)
Dymly in þat derke dethe	þer dawes neuer morowen	(*SE* 306)
Hungrie inwith helle-hole	and herken after meeles	(*SE* 307)
Þen sayd he with a sadde soun,	Oure Sauyoure be louyd	(*SE* 324)
And þe relefe of þe lodely lures	þat my soule has leuyd in	(*SE* 328)

There is always a long dip between the non-combination element at verse-opening and the first combination element, on which the pre-caesural stress falls.

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[74] See, for examples, *Morte Arthur* 3080 ('That no lele ligemane that to hym lonngede') and *MA* 1518 ('Sir Lucius lygge-mene loste are fore euer'); *Morte Arthur*, ed. Edmund Brock, new edn., EETS OS 8 (London, 1871).

Sir Gawain, *DT*, and *WA* have no instance of a pre-caesural combination in which both combination elements have disyllabic stems, and this is true of *SE*. The poet occasionally makes use of genitive + noun and noun + noun combinations, though they are fairly common ones. But unlike the *DT* poet and the *WA* poet, the *SE* poet does not normally force minor adjectives such as *same*, *all*, and *any* to bear alliteration merely to include a non-alliterating noun.[75] He also allows disjunction between alliteration and stress to occur at the pre-caesural combinations—a feature never observed in *DT* (where the second a-verse stress invariably falls on the adjective combination element, which is also always alliterated).[76] Thus, the *SE* poet shows the same flexibility as the *Gawain* poet regarding the handling of the pre-caesural combinations. But there is also a difference: in *SE*, adjectives in A + N combinations such as 'grete' ('grete prece' 141a), 'gode' ('gode faithe' 230a), 'wrang' ('wrang dome' 236a), 'hegh' ('hegh gate' 241a), and 'faire' ('faire cors' 317)—which are all non-alliterating—are, though contextually significant and far from redundant, nevertheless not as striking and exuberant as those in the Cotton Nero poems.[77] This stylistic difference is evidence against the common authorship of these poems. Yet the conciseness of his style reflects and matches his purpose in this poem: to answer, clearly and bravely, one of the most complicated, controversial theological questions in his time.

5.6 Combination of verb + derivative adverb

In *Sir Gawain*, combinations of verb + derivative adverb occur at verse-opening 39 times (1.93%), always accompanied by double alliteration.[78] *Cleanness* has 29 such instances (1.60%),[79] *Patience* 7 (1.32%),[80] *SE* 7 (1.99%),[81] and *WA* 33 (1.58%).[82] But

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[75] *SE* 12a ('Til Saynt Austyn into Sandewich') is the only instance of a minor adjective used as a combination element to provide alliteration in the a-verse; in the b-verse, alliterative stress probably falls on this title noun at *SE* 35 ('Syttes and semely in þe sege of Saynt Paule mynster').
[76] Two apparent exceptions are discussed on pp. 215 above.
[77] I will discuss *Erkenwald* poet's treatment of A + N combinations in more detail in 6.7 below.
[78] The occurrence of such combinations is constantly avoided at pre-caesural position, and only 4 instances are attested: e.g. *SG* 2223 ('A denez ax nwe dyȝt þe dynt with to ȝelde') and *SG* 1680 ('Now, þrid tyme þrowe best, þenk on þe morne'); see 3.2.3 above.
[79] 60, 341, 458, 504, 509, 596, 603, 614, 635, 654, 696, 755, 783, 822, 874, 920, 960, 975, 1040, 1066, 1106, 1140, 1220, 1256, 1384, 1392, 1652, 1724, 1778; 901 ('tid'), 936 ('fast'), and 1206 ('highe') are the only instances in which a derivational adverb does not join the line-internal alliteration; see below.
[80] 65, 104, 250, 381, 402, 428, 447.
[81] 18, 35, 50, 62, 139, 334, 335.

this type of combination is, again, almost completely absent from *DT*, which has only one instance:

Holy het home to have þe hetes before (*DT* 995)

Morphologically, 'holy' is a derivative adverb. But 'holy' (= 'quite,' 'entirely') here functions as an emphasizer, and cannot be regarded as a clear example of verb + derivative adverb. The poem has one instance of a combination with *single* alliteration:

Thonkes gretly his goddis þat hym grace lent (*DT* 955)

The combination of verb + derivative adverb is not otherwise a type of combination which the *DT* poet avails himself of. In other words, when it occurs, it always occupies two staves. Thus, the relationship between syntax and metre in *DT* is not developed as fully as in the other works concerned.

A combination with single alliteration also occurs in *Cleanness* and *WA*, but only very rarely (no instances are found in *Patience* and *SE*):

And loke even þat þyn ark have of heȝþe þrette (*C* 317)
Þaȝ fast laþed hem Loth, þay leȝen ful stylle (*C* 936)
Hiȝe skelt watȝ þe askry þe skewes anunder (*C* 1206)

Cayre tid of þis kythe er combred þou worþe (*C* 901)
Langis sare to þe layke and on loft worthis (*WA* 385)

In each case, the first a-verse stress falls, with the application of the spacing rule, on the second combination element, which, at *C* 901 and *WA* 385, however, is not alliterated. It may be worth pointing out that the non-alliterating elements (e.g. 'loke', 'tid', 'sare', etc.) in the above examples are all semantically light, and therefore should not perhaps be regarded as real exceptions to the general rule of double alliteration that seems to be governing verb + derivative adverb combinations occurring at verse-opening.

One more point needs to be made regarding verb + derivative adverb combinations in

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[82] 77, 114, 264, 281, 303, 393, 456, 485, 678, 698, 731, 779, 780, 789, 818, 822, 919, 929, 1011, 1052, 1089, 1147, 1158, 1159, 1205, 1422, 1423, 1455, 1484, 1486, 1551, 5115, 5200; 385 ('sare') is the only instance in which a derivational adverb does not alliterate; see below.

the control texts. I have argued that, in crowded a-verses involving this type of combination, the first stress always falls on the second (whether verb or adverb) element. But there is one exception:

Þat spakly sprent my spyrit with vnsparid murthe (*SE* 335)

The grammatical *–e* for the preterit 'sprent' should perhaps be assumed so that the verse follows the general stress pattern that is observed in all the other instances of verse-opening verb + adverb combinations. Otherwise, stress must fall on 'spakly' to create the obligatory long central dip before 'spyrit', on which the pre-caesural stress falls.[83]

5.7 'Compound'-noun phrases

In Chapter III, I examined 'compound'-noun phrases in *Sir Gawain.*[84] In the verses involving such phrases, the noun is preceded by two adjectives (or adverb + adjective).[85] The pre-caesural stress is always borne by the noun whether or not it alliterates. And on which of the two remaining words the first a-verse stress falls is dictated by the spacing rule. Verses involving 'compound'-noun phrases occur equally frequently in the Cotton Nero poems, *SE*, and *WA*: *Sir Gawain* has 16 instances (0.79%),[86] *Cleanness* 24 (1.32%),[87] *Patience* 5 (0.94%),[88] *SE* 3 (0.85%),[89] and *WA* 20

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[83] Cf. *SG* 2316 ('He sprit forth spenne-fote more þen a spere lenþe'); here, if the adverb 'spenne-fote' is taken as one word and stressed on its first syllable, the past tense *–e* for 'sprit' must then be assumed to create a long dip, which is a metrical condition for the standard a-verse. Alternatively, the pre-caesural stress can be taken to fall on '-fote' rather than 'spenne-'; this would render the a-verse *ax*, or *a...(x)a* if one takes 'spenne-fote' as a variant of an adjective + noun combination, used here as an adverb).

[84] See 3.1.5 above.

[85] The construction 'adverb + participial adjective + noun' is found, for example, at *SG* 1762a and *C* 1381a, in which 'wiȝt' and 'wonder' are treated as an adverb modifying the following participial adjective; other grammatical forms taken by the 'compound'-noun phrase are adjective + noun + noun, the last two forming a compound noun, as in *C* 952a ('Þat þe þik þunder-þrast '), genitive + adjective + noun (e.g. *WA* 4944a 'And Gods glorious gleme'), and adjective + genitive + noun (e.g. *C* 1299a 'Moni semly syre soun').

[86] 118, 181, 419, 579, 727, 786, 789, 745, 905, 953, 1001, 1013, 1762, 1980, 2036, 2166.

[87] 258, 283, 302, 334, 366, 367, 382, 514, 538, 706, 721, 790, 814, 840, 952, 981, 1012, 1020, 1082, 1299, 1381, 1396, 1525, 1303.

[88] 26, 247, 257, 319, 508.

[89] 34, 134, 319.

(0.96%).[90] Again, they are remarkable for their absence in *DT* (though there is one possible instance[91]).

In the following crowded a-verses, both the noun and the two adjectives alliterate, and the first a-verse stress falls, with the application of the spacing rule, on the first adjective, the second thus being stress-subordinated and absorbed into the long central dip. These verses are thus scanned as *a(a)a*):

Of vche clene comly kynde	(*C* 334a)
Wylde wrakful wordeȝ	(*C* 302a)
All þe mukel mayny-molde	(*C* 514a)
At a style stolen steuen	(*C* 706a)[92]
Now fifty fyn frendeȝ	(*C* 721a)
Þat þe þik þunder-þrast	(*C* 952a)
Moni semly syre soun	(*C* 1299a)
With a wonder wroȝt walle	(*C* 1381a)
Stepe stayred stones	(*C* 1396a)
Alle þe goude golden goddes	(*C* 1525a)
And wyth a schryllë scharp schout	(*C* 840a)[93]
Large lyons lockis	(*WA* 602a)
Many miȝtfull man	(*WA* 1543a)
A, A, happy haly hereman	(*WA* 5065a)

The same rhythmic pattern (i.e. stress on the first 'compound' element and the noun with a long dip between) occurs in the following lines, but there, either the pre-caesural stress falls on the *non*-alliterating noun (i.e. *a(a)x*) or one of the 'compound' elements is unalliterated (i.e. *x(a)a* or *a(x)a*). Note that stress on the two alliterating words would,

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[90] 91, 284, 425, 467, 483, 553, 602, 603, 607, 903, 1217, 1277, 1543, 1647, 1657, 4944, 5065, 5015, 5083, 5155.

[91] See p. 237 below.

[92] Cf. *SG* 1659a ('Wyth stille stolen countenaunce').

[93] Sounding of final *–e* in 'schrylle' must be assumed to create the obligatory long central dip, but it is not certain whether the sounding is justified etymologically (it is certainly not grammatically); Anderson compares OE *scyl* and LG *schrell*, and in *MED* it is entered as *shrille* [? From *shil(le* adj., with intrusive *r* by analogy with *skrĭk* n., *skrĭken* v., *scrēmen* v., etc.). *OED* does not specify its etymology, simply giving ME *shrille* (adj. adv.), which, it says, is also related to LG *schrell*. Cf. CT. VII, 3395 ('Ne made nevere shoutes half so shrille'), in which the sounding of final *–e* in 'shrille' (which is not grammatically justified) is probably the case, as it occurs at line-ending rhyming with 'kille' ('Whan that they wolden any Flemyng kille').

in each case, create an a-verse unmetrical by my rule, as it would be a crowded verse with no long dip between the two stresses:[94]

With moni a modey moder chylde	(*C* 1303a)
Hit watȝ lusty Lothes wyf	(*C* 981a)
Forþy þe derk dedē see	(*C* 1020a)
Þe hole-foted fowle	(*C* 538a)
His two dere doȝtereȝ	(*C* 814a)[95]
For þay þe gracious Godes sunes	(*P* 26a)
For nade þe hyȝe heven-kyng	(*P* 257a)
To skyre scarlet hewe	(*WA* 467a)
As any ȝare ȝeten golde	(*WA* 607a)
Þai fande a ferly faire tre	(*WA* 5105a)
He said, Hende haly tree	(*WA* 5155a)
And seuen stele-grauyn stanys	(*WA* 284a)
Sire, as ȝondire hiȝe hill	(*WA* 1217a)
A grym grisely gome	(*WA* 5083a)[96]
At love London toun	(*SE* 34a)
Mony a gay grete lorde	(*SE* 134a)[97]
And of þe gracious Holy Goste	(*SE* 319a)

In the following crowded a-verses, the first a-verse stress falls on the second, instead of the first, 'compound' element (i.e. *(a)aa* or *(a)ax*):

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[94] Compare *C* 831a ('Wela wynnely wlonk'), which involves a 'compound'-*adjective* phrase (i.e. adverb + adverb + adjective), which may be regarded as a variation on the 'compound'-noun phrase that concerns us here.

[95] Here, numeral 'two' may be better regarded as a closed-class word as it does not join the alliteration; the a-verse would then become a standard a-verse with stress falling on the two alliterating open-class words, 'dere' and 'doȝtereȝ'.

[96] Here, I take 'grisely' to be disyllabic (rather than trisyllabic), as the medial vowel is unetymological (<OE. *grislic*).

[97] This verse has the syntactic structure, 'many a + adjective + noun', which conveys plural sense, though the noun is strictly singular; verses from Chaucer confirm that the adjective in this construction is inflected when the metre requires; see pp. 167-8 above and, especially, n. 100. The verse in question supports my argument that the spelling in *SE* reflects the metre quite accurately.

Þe aþel aunceterez sunez (*C* 258a)

So mony malicious mon (*P* 508a)

And Gods glorious gleme (*WA* 4944a)

At *C* 367a, a past participle ending on a disyllabic stem may have syllabic value:

Mony clusterëd clowde (*C* 367a)

It is possible to take this a-verse simply as a standard a-verse (rather than a crowded one), since verse-opening 'mony', a minor adjective, is here unalliterated and can therefore be treated as equivalent to a closed-class word.

I have argued in Chapter IV that *-and(e* is probably disyllabic when affixed to a monosyllabic stem and followed by a one-word continuant with stress on its first syllable (e.g. 'and lemandë torches' *SG* 1119b).[98] I have also discussed instances in *Sir Gawain*, *Cleanness*, and *Patience*, of a 'compound'-noun phrase involving *–and(e* adjective and demonstrated that the first a-verse stress falls, with the application of the spacing rule, on the first syllable of the participial adjective, followed by a long central dip before the pre-caesural stress, which falls on the noun.[99] In the Cotton Nero poems, *–and(e* occurs, almost always, spelled with final *–e*, as in the following examples from *Cleanness* and *Patience*:

Felle temptande tene (*C* 283a)

Þe mukel lauande logh (*C* 366a)

Þe roȝe raynande ryg (*C* 382a)

When bryȝt brennande brondeȝ (*C* 1012a)

And rial ryngande rotes (*C* 1082a)

Royl rollande fax (*C* 790a)

A wylde walterande whal (*P* 247a)

Þe pure poplande hourle (*P* 319a)

In contrast, *-and* in *WA* appears consistently without final *–e*, as in the following

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[98] See also 4.3.3 above.

[99] See pp. 181-2 above.

lines:[100]

Fell fe3tand **f**olke	(*WA* 91a)
Þe li3t-lemand **l**ate	(*WA* 553a)
Of bri3t blasand **bl**ewe	(*WA* 1647a)
Store starand **st**anes	(*WA* 1657a)
In schene **schem**erand **schr**oude	(*WA* 483a)
A schene **sch**[emer]and **sch**ild	(*WA* 903a)
With grete **gl**esenand **e**3en	(*WA* 603a)
Þe pure **p**opulande **h**urle	(*WA* 1277a)

'Schemerand' (<OE. *scymrian*), 'glesenand' (<OE. *glisnian*), and 'populande'[101] occur with a non-etymological medial vowel, which might represent a glide vowel pronunciation. However, if the medial vowel in these three words is merely graphical, these instances, too, share the pattern '*-and(e* following monosyllabic stem + one-word continuant with stress on its first syllable'. Although one should not assume that a practice found in one poem must be true of other poems, it appears probable that in *WA*, too, *-and* was disyllabic under this condition.

There is only one instance (in *WA*) in which the spacing rule would render the verse unmetrical, as it would—whether the first stress is borne by the first or second adjective—have only a short dip or no dip between the first stress and the pre-caesural stress, which falls on the noun:

With a **r**ede golde **r**ynge	on þis aray grayuyn	(*WA* 425)

The sounding of the non-grammatical *–e*, as the spelling indicates, may be intended in this particular case.[102]

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[100] As Duggan and T. Turville-Petre point out, the poet's original is consistently 'translated' by the A scribe into his own Northern dialect (see xliii in *The Wars of Alexander*, edited by Duggan and T. Turville-Petre), and it is therefore the scribe's practice that I am dealing with here.

[101] See n. 122 on p. 182 above.

[102] It may be worth pointing out that in *Sir Gawain*, too, *golde* (occurring always with a spelled *–e*) causes difficulties: e.g. *SG* 195b 'of **br**ende golde rungen', *SG* 600b 'with bri3t golde bounden', in both of which the sounding of final *–e* is not grammatically justified; though at *SG* 620 'of pure golde hwez', *SG* 854b 'wyth cler golde hemmez', *SG* 857b 'red golde ryngez', *SG* 1817b 'of red golde werkez', the sounding of final *–e* can be justified grammatically (if one takes 'golde' as an attributive adjective modifying a plural noun). For a discussion of ungrammatical and unetymological final *–e* inserted for metrical reasons, see D. Minkova, *History of Final Vowels*, 59, 175, 187.

DT has only one instance of the 'compound'-noun phrase:

The grete goldyn flese with a greke noble (*DT* 667a)

As the pre-caesural stress must fall, as elsewhere, on the noun, this a-verse shows disjunction between alliteration and stress at the pre-caesural position, which, as I have argued, is *not* a metrical feature of this poem. The (nearly) complete absence of the 'compound'-noun phrase in this poem further indicates that some of the syntactic-metrical patterns used frequently in other alliterative poems are, in this poem, absent or, if they occur, still incipient, and that the *DT*-poet's handling of the pre-caesural position is more conservative than any other poets concerned.

5.8 Unmetrical a-verses

In Chapter III, I have presented a list of the a-verses in *Sir Gawain* that do not comply with the rhythmic rules that have emerged from the study of this poem's metre: that is, any a-verse, if it is a standard one, must have at least one long dip either before or after the first stress; and, if it is a crowded one, a long central dip between the word bearing the pre-caesural stress and one of the (normally) two preceding open-class words, on which the first a-verse stress consequently falls.[103] Such unmetrical a-verses are found only 15 times in *Sir Gawain* (0.74%), 10 in *Cleanness* (0.55%), 2 in *Patience* (0.38%) and 2 in *WA* (0.10%). No certain instance of an unmetrical a-verse is attested in *SE*. Interestingly, *DT* shows the highest figure, having 23 such instances (1.12%).

Cleanness has 10 instances in which the a-verse lacks the obligatory long dip:

Of secounde monyth	þe seuenteþe day ryȝteȝ	(*C* 427)[104]
Þenne arȝed Abraham	and alle his mod chaunged	(*C* 713)
And syþen soberly	Syreȝ, I yow byseche	(*C* 799)[105]
Þen laled Loth	Lorde, what is best	(*C* 913)
Þat wynnes worschyp	abof alle whyte stones	(*C* 1120)
Wyth charged chariotes	þe cheftayn he fyndes	(*C* 1295)

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103 See 3.3.3 above.

104 Final *–e* in 'secounde' is simply graphical (<OF. *second*).

105 It is highly likely that this a-verse lacks *sayd(e)* 'said', which apropriately introduces Lot's speech in

Such god, such gounes	such gay vesselles	(*C* 1315)
And bougoun3 busch	batered so þikke	(*C* 1416)
Of mony kyndes	of fele kyn hues	(*C* 1483)
And þenne arn dressed	duke3 and prynces	(*C* 1518)

C 1291 would have a long dip only if one takes 'Nabu3ardan' to carry two stresses:[106]

Now hat3 Nabu3ardan	nummen hit al samen	(*C* 1291)

The following lines would have a long dip if an etymological or grammatical *–e* is sounded:

And rehaytë rekenly	þe reche and þe pouer	(*C* 127)
Gordë to Gomorra	þat þe grounde laused	(*C* 957)
His namë wat3 Nabu3ardan	to noye þe lues	(*C* 1236)
Þe placë þat plyed	þe pursaunt wythinne	(*C* 1385)
To hengë þe harlotes	he he3ed ful ofte	(*C* 1584)
Vchë hous heyred wat3	withinne a honde-whyle	(*C* 1786)

Patience has two unmetrical a-verses, if one assumes ictus to fall on the alliterating syllables of the two open-class words; the first case is found at *P* 396:

Þe rurd schal ryse to hym	þat rawþe schal have	(*P* 396)

Stress on the two alliterating open-class words 'rurd' and 'ryse' would result in an a-verse lacking a long dip either before or after the first stress. I would therefore take this a-verse as a crowded verse in which the pre-caesural stress falls on the preposition 'to', thus stress-subordinating 'ryse', as there is no long dip between these two.[107] This reading renders the a-verse *a(a)x*, in which the disjunction between alliteration and stress takes place. Alternatively, it is also possible that the original reading was *Þe*

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the b-verse.

[106] Compare *C* 1261 ('And 3et Nabu3ardan nyl neuer stynt') in which 'Nabu3ardan' must be assumed to carry two stresses ('Nebu3ardan') so that the a-verse has the obligatory long dip.

[107] Stress never falls on a pronoun when it is a prepositional complement (see pp. 63-6 above). At *SG* 1188 ('Þat dro3 þe dor after hir ful dernly and style'), too, the pre-caesural stress falls on the preposition 'after', and stress-subordinating the preceding alliterating open-class word and absorbing the prepositional complement into the post-stress dip (see p. 69 above).

rurd rysë schal to hym (in which stress falls on *ryse* and the preposition *to*, stress-subordinating *rurd* at verse-opening), the scribe having normalised the word order by transposing *ryse* with *schal*, thereby making the verse unmetrical.

P 279 is also unmetrical if the second stress is taken to fall on the first syllable of the French-derived noun, 'recoverer':

No rest ne recoverer bot ramel ande myre (*P* 279)

Interestingly, cases like this are also found in *Sir Gawain.* I have discussed them in Chapter III,[108] but I quote them again:

With coruon coprounes	craftyly sleȝe	(*SG* 797)
And heȝly honowred	with haþelez aboute	(*SG* 949)
Þe mon hem maynteines	ioy mot þay haue	(*SG* 2053)
With merþe and mynstralsye	wyth metez at hor wylle	(*SG* 1952)
Ne kest no kauelacion	in kyngez hous Arthor	(*SG* 2275)

These a-verses are all unmetrical (lacking a long dip) if the second stress falls, in each French-derived noun, on the first syllable, which is alliterating, but would become metrical if the second stress can be assumed to fall on the second, third, or fourth syllable (i.e. 'coprounes', 'honowred', 'maynteines', 'mynstralsye', 'kauelacion'). In view of these instances, 'recoverer' at *P* 279 above could also be assumed to have stress on either its penultimate syllable ('recoverer') or its second syllable ('recoverer'[109]).

There are three other possible instances of an unmetrical a-verse, all of which, however, will become regular with the sounding of etymological or grammatical *–e*:[110]

What ledë moȝt lyve	bi lawe of any kynde	(*P* 259)
Uch prynce, uchë prest	and prelates alle	(*P* 389)
Allë faste frely	for her falce werkes	(*P* 390)[111]

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[108] See 3.3.3 above.

[109] At *C* 394 ('Recouerer of þe creator þay cryed vchone'), 'recouerer' alliterates on /k/. In view of this, it seems more likely that *P* 279 has its second stress on the second syllable of 'recoverer'; the reading which requires one to assume the disjunction between alliteration and stress in 'recoverer' can, in fact, produce not only a metrical a-verse but also a reading more natural, to the modern ear, than the one which requires stress shift to its prefix 're-'.

[110] For the sounding of final *–e* in 'lede', see pp. 74-5 above.

[111] The argument for disyllabic pronunciation of 'alle' is less secure, as this is the only instance (in the CN poem) in which the sounding of the grammatical *-e* seems to be required for metrical reasons.

The spellings seem to be a good guide for the sounding of such 'metrical' *es*, and the variation between 'uch' and 'uche' is especially precise at *P* 389a.

In *WA*, there are lines in which a long dip does not occur either before or after the first stress, if one assumes, as Duggan and Turville-Petre do, invariable coincidence of alliteration and stress and the requirement of two full staves (i.e. staves accompanied by alliteration) in the a-verse in this poem:[112]

Tharmes thrist owt	thee-banes and shulderes	(*WA* 773)
Freschly fendid of	and fersly withstude	(*WA* 1155)[113]

These a-verses could perhaps be treated as metrical, if one assumes, in this poem, too, the possible disjunction between alliteration and stress. At *WA* 773a and *WA* 1155a, the pre-caesural stress on the non-alliterating adverb ('owt' and 'of'), with consequent stress-subordination of the alliterating verb, would create the required long dip, which does not occur if the two alliterating open-class words are to bear stress. However, it is possible that these verses are corrupt; in fact, need for emendation at 773 is suggested by the editors, and, in the case of line 1155, the a-verse may perhaps be emended to *Freschly defendid of*, in view of the almost identical verse at 1529a ('Fersly defend of'), which has the obligatory long dip (and is therefore metrical).

WA 947 and *WA* 1254 would have an obligatory long dip only if 'Olympadas' and 'Anectanabus' are taken to carry two stresses:

And had **O**lympa**d**as[114]	openly forsaken	(*WA* 947)
Sire **A**necta[n**a**]bus[115]	quod **a**ll with a steuen	(*WA* 1254)

But in the following a-verses, 'Olympadas' and 'Anectanabus' have only one stress, which must fall, not on the first syllable (i.e. '**O**lympadas', '**A**nectanabus'), but on the penultimate syllable ('-**a**das', '-**a**bus'), so that these verses will have the obligatory long dip:

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[112] I discounted instances in which only one of the two a-verse staves joins the alliteration (e.g. *ax*), but in which a long dip occurs at either verse-opening or pre-caesura, as in *WA* 15 ('And I forwith ȝow all wttillis to schewe'), *WA* 41 ('He was wyse enoȝe wirdis to reken'), *WA* 4963 ('And on þe aȝtent day eftire þe prime'), and *WA* 5134 ('In quatkyn maner of lede sall me þire treis sware').

[113] The Dublin manuscript has 'defendyng' (instead of 'fendid'), giving a metrically acceptable a-verse.

[114] Cf. *C* 1291: 'Now hatȝ Nabuȝardan nummen hit al samen'; here, too, the proper noun following the auxiliary 'hatȝ' probably takes two stresses to ensure the obligatory long dip, though the first stress might fall on 'Now' (rather than on the first syllable of 'Nabuȝardan').

[115] The second stress may fall on '-us' and ,at *WA* 947a, on '-as'.

Þen [answard] Olympadas,[116]	Now, honourable maistir	(*WA* 310)
Þan eftir Anectanabus	scho onane clepis	(*WA* 533)
Sent eftir Anectanabus	and askis him belyue	(*WA* 670)

Similarly, at *WA* 1735:

Erle or emperoure	or any erdly prince	(*WA* 1735)

the second stress has to be taken to fall on '-oure' rather than on the first syllable ('e-'), on which stress normally falls.[117]

In this way, the Cotton Nero poems, *SE*, and *WA* present only a statistically insignificant minority of verses that are rendered unmetrical by my rule. It is therefore slightly surprising that *DT* gives 23 unmetrical a-verses (1.12%), the highest percentage of all:

Eson afterwarde	(*DT* 121)
As Ovid openly	(*DT* 123)
Of lenght and largeness	(*DT* 318)
She compast kenly	(*DT* 496)
Of suergys (='waxtapers') semly	(*DT* 700)
Past fro port	(*DT* 1068)
But stert vp stithly	(*DT* 1240)
Wemen, wale childur	(*DT* 1382)
To cache a castell	(*DT* 1467)
Pauyt prudly	(*DT* 1661)
That I with Ercules	(*DT* 1871)
Caght in Cablis	(*DT* 1944)
The ship ay shot furth	(*DT* 1994)
And burdes borne downe	(*DT* 486)
Knightes cast doune	(*DT* 1199)

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[116] If the manuscript reading (i.e. *sayd*) is adopted, one would have to take 'Olympadas' to carry two stresses (e.g. 'Olympadas') so that the verse would have two full staves, which is required by Duggan's metrical rule. At 1966 ('And als of Olimpades þat honourable lady'), if 'als' is taken to carry the first stress, the second stress must fall on a syllable other than the first syllable of 'Olympades' to ensure the obligatory long dip.

[117] However, at *WA* 1005 ('Come driuand fra Darius þe deyne empereure'), the line-final ictus falls on the third syllable of 'empereure'.

Brent and betyn downe	(*DT* 1730)[118]

7 unmetrical a-verses are attested in just 15 lines between 1584 and 1598:

Sadlers, souters	(*DT* 1585)
Wrightes, websters	(*DT* 1587)
Parnters, painters	(*DT* 1591)
Bochers, bladsmythis	(*DT* 1592)
fferrers, flecchours	(*DT* 1593)
Cokes, condlers	(*DT* 1596)
With barburs bigget	(*DT* 1598)

The a-verses below would be metrical if grammatical or etymological *–e* is sounded, as the spellings indicate:

The iij^{d} day throly	(*DT* 208)
These balëfull brether	(*DT* 945)
Goldsmythës, Glouers	(*DT* 1584)
The windowës, worthely	(*DT* 1648)
The fourthë day fell	(*DT* 2007)

DT 658a would also have the obligatory long dip only if the sounding of the (unetymological) medial vowel in 'louesom' is assumed:

Most louësom lady	(*DT* 658)

Line 667a would become unmetrical, if stress is taken to fall on the two adjectives instead of the first adjective and the noun:

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[118] In the last three examples (486, 1199, 1730), stress on the monosyllabic adverb *downe*, which carries more semantic weight than the preceding verbs, would make the verse metrical (and would sound most natural). However, alliteration and stress seems elsewhere always to coincide in a-verses involving pre-caesural verb + simple adverb combinations in which the monosyllabic adverb is semantically more important than the verb: e.g. 389a ('Bede his doughter come downe'), 504a ('Bade his doughter come doune'), 5801a ('Then Vlexes come vp'); but alliteration and stress falls on the verb when it carries more meaning, as in 5007 ('Betyn and brent doun vnto bare askes'). Furthermore, disjunction between alliteration and stress at the pre-caesural position hardly ever occurs in this poem (except for 'The grete goldyn flese' 667a). Considering these points, I treat the a-verses in question as unmetrical.

The grete goldyn flese (*DT* 667)

5.9 Unmetrical b-verses

In *Sir Gawain*, 89 b-verses (4.40%) are unmetrical as they stand, because (1) they lack an obligatory long dip either before or after the first b-verse stress, or (2) there are two long dips. Although many of the unmetrical b-verses are easily emended,[119] I will list here all the instances which are unmetrical as they stand, in order to examine the degree of accuracy with which the spelling of this text reflects the metre, and also to compare it with that of the other Cotton Nero poems, *Cleanness* and *Patience*, and that of *St Erkenwald*, a poem once attributed to the *Gawain* poet.[120] The purpose of this study is to show that the percentages for a-verses unmetrical by my rule, which I have given above, are in fact much *lower* than those for b-verses unmetrical by Duggan's rule in the Cotton Nero poems as well as those that Duggan appears to accept, in his first corpus, as being within the permissible range of irregularity,[121] and thereby to argue for the validity of my a-verse rules.

B-verses with no long dip occur in 68 lines:

Of sum auenturus þyng	an vncouþe tale	(93)
Wylde werbles and wyȝt	wakned lote	(119)
And þat þe myriest in his muckel	þat myȝt ride	(142)
Þer mony bellez ful bryȝt	of brende golde rungen	(195)
Wheþer hade he no helme	ne hawbergh nauther	(203)
As wel schapen to schere	as scharp rasores	(213)
And al stouned at his steuen	and stonstil seten	(242)
And þy burȝ and þy burnes	best ar holden	(259)

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[119] e.g. 1255b ('oþer golde þat þay hauen') and 1956b ('oþer dronken ben oþer'), etc. in which the emendation of 'oþer' to monosyllabic *or* can be suggested, and 1221b ('to karp yow wyth'), 1039b ('to worch youre hest'), 1526b ('ȝern to schewe'), etc., all of which can be emended by inserting infinitive *–e*.
[120] There are some b-verses which, as they stand, appear to have two long dips: e.g. 'Vpon such a dere day er hym deuised were' (92), 'Þat bede þe þis buffet quat-so bifallez after' (382), and 1216, 2192, etc.; but since 'deuised' and 'bifallez', which bear the first b-verse stress, can be treated as disyllabic with syncope of *–ed* or *–es* inflexional ending, these b-verses are discounted here; see p. 248 below.
[121] See also the summary at the end of this chapter.

For had I founded in fere	in fe3tyng wyse	(267)
Lepe ly3tly me to	and lach þis weppen	(292)
For þou may leng in þy londe	and layt no fyrre	(411)
Warnez hym for þe wynter	to wax ful rype	(522)
Sir Boos, and Sir Byduer	big men boþe	(554)
And syþen þe brawden bryné	of bry3t stel ryngez	(580)
Þe brydel barred aboute	with bry3t golde bounden	(600)
Hit is a a syngne þat Salamon	set sumquyle	(625)
And pité, þat passez alle poyntez,	þyse pure fyue	(654)
And fyched vpon fyue poyntez	þat fayld neuer	(658)
Ne samned neuer in no syde	ne sundred nouþer	(659)
Withouten ende at any noke	I oquere fynde	(660)[122]
Þat auþer God oþer gome	wyth goud hert louied	(702)
Bi contray caryez þis kny3t	tyl Krystmasse euen	(734)
Nade he sayned hymself,	segge, bot þrye	(763)
Þer fayre fyre vpon flet	fersly brenned	(832)
Welne3 to vche haþel	alle on hwes	(867)
Whyssynes vpon queldepoyntes	þat koynt wer boþe	(877)
Clad wyth a clene cloþe	þat cler quyt schewed	(885)
And þe teccheles termes	of talkyng noble	(917)
When burnez blyþe of his burþe	schal sitte	(922)
Hir brest and hir bry3t þrote	bare displayed	(955)
So did hit þere on þat day	þur3 dayntés mony	(998)
And I am wy3e at your wylle	to worch youre hest	(1039)
Bi God, quoþ Gawayn þe gode	I grant þertylle	(1110)
Þay stoden and stemed	and stylly speken	(1117)
Ful erly bifore þe day	þe folk vprysen	(1126)
Blwe bygly in buglez	þre bare mote	(1141)
Þe hindez were halden in	with hay and war	(1158)

[122] Dugan takes stress to fall on 'ende', 'any', and 'noke' in what he reads as an 'extended' a-verse, arguing that alliteration on vowels is more likely than elision alliteration ('Withouten end', and 'noke'); see Duggan, 'Metre', 225, n. 7. However, I assume no extended a-verses, and would not assume stress on the minor adjective 'any'—which requires one to assume that 'any' and 'noke' are forming an adjective + noun combination, which can be treated as a single metrical unit; the resulting subordination of the following noun 'noke' would produce a verse with only a short dip between the two stresses ('ende' and 'any'), which is unmetrical by my rule. In addition, the *Gawain* poet, as it has been demonstrated, rarely uses minor adjectives as a combination element merely to insert a non-alliterating noun in a line.

Watz al toraced and rent	at þe resayt	(1168)
And Gawayn þe god mon	in gay bed lygez	(1179)
A little dyn at his dor	and dernly vpon	(1183)
I wolde boȝe of þis bed	and busk me better	(1220)
I schulde keuer þe more comfort	to karp yow wyth	(1221)
Nay for soth, beau sir	sayd that swete	(1222)
Ȝe schal not rise of your bedde	I rych yow better	(1223)
I schal ware my whyle wel	quyl hit lastez	(1235)
I haf hit holly in my honde	þat al desyres	(1257)
Bot þat ȝe be Gawan	hit gotz in mynde	(1293)
For he watz brem bor	alther-grattest[123]	(1441)
Oghe to a ȝonke þynk	ȝern to schewe	(1526)
Þe lorde ful lowde with lote	and laȝter myry	(1623)
Kesten cloþez vpon	clere lyȝt þenne	(1649)
Forþy þow lye in þy loft	and lach þyn ese	(1676)
Hir brest bare bifore	and bihinde eke	(1741)
Bot I am swared for soþe	þat sore me þinkkez	(1793)
Þat he wolde lyste his lyf	and lern hym better	(1878)
Bi Kryst, quoþ þat oþer knyȝt,	ȝe cach much sele	(1938)
Þe day dryuez to þe derk	as Dryȝtyn biddez	(1999)
And þou schal se in þat slade	þe self chapel	(2147)
Ne bere þe felaȝschip þurȝ þis fryth	on fote fyrre	(2151)
Bi a forȝ of a flode	þat ferked þare	(2173)
Is ryched at þe reuerence	me, renk, to mete	(2206)
I schal gruch þe no grwe	for grem þat fallez	(2251)
For I schal stonde þe a strok	and start no more	(2286)
Al þe gayne þow me gef	as god mon schulde	(2349)
Bot þat watz for no wylyde werke	ne wowyng nauþer	(2367)
For so watz Adam in erde	with one bygyled	(2416)
And mony aventure in vale	and venquyst ofte	(2482)
Þer wakned wele in þat wone	when wyst þe grete	(2490)

The following are the b-verses in which two long dips occur (16 lines):

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[123] The editorial comma between 'brem' and 'bor' suggests that Tolkien & Gordon take the caesura to come between these two words; but as it normally occurs at a phrasal boundary, I take it to occur after 'bor'.

Bot for as much as ȝe ar myn em	I am only to prayse	(356)
Now ridez þis renk	þurȝ þe ryalme of Logres	(691)
Er he watz war in þe wod	of a won in a mote	(764)
Þat he beknew cortaysly	of þe court þat he were	(903)
Quyle forth dayez, and ferk	on þe fyrst of þe ȝere	(1072)
Þen much of þe garysoun	oþer golde þat þay hauen	(1255)
Bot þe daynté þat þay delen	for my disert nys euen	(1266)
Iwysse, worþy, quoþ þe wyȝe,	ȝe haf waled wel better	(1276)
Two fyngeres þay fonde	of þe fowlest of alle	(1329)
Of þat art, bi þe half,	or a hundreth of seche	(1543)
Oþer lach þer hir luf	oþer lodly refuse	(1772)
And lettez be your bisinesse	for I bayþe hit yow neuer	(1840)
Þen kest þe knyȝt	and hit come to his hert	(1855)
Bot if þe douthe had doted	oþer dronken ben oþer	(1956)
Þen with ledes and lyȝt	he watz ladde to his chambre	(1989)
And hatz þe penaunce apert	of þe poynt of myn egge	(2392)

I have argued in Chapter IV that any b-verse with a four-syllable dip should be regarded as unmetrical.[124] If this is the case, line 2108b is, too, unmetrical:

Monk oþer masseprest	oþer any mon elles	(2108)

If 'oþer' represents or is an error of monosyllabic *or*, the verse will become metrical, as with *SG* 1255b ('oþer golde þat þay hauen'), *SG* 1772b ('oþer lodly refuse'), and *SG* 1956b ('oþer dronken ben oþer') above, in which disyllabic *oþer* produces the second long dip.

In the following b-verses, stress on the alliterating word will render the verse unmetrical, lacking its obligatory long dip:

Þat þou schal seche me þiself	where-*so* þou hopes	(395)
I schal bynd yow in your bedde	þat *b*e ȝe trayst	(1211)
Þe hunt rehayted þe houndez	þat *h*it fyrst mynged	(1422)
Þe mon hem maynteines	ioy *m*ot þay haue	(2053)

These b-verses would become metrical only if a mute stave can, as in *Piers Plowman*,

be assumed in *Sir Gawain* as well.[125]

I have argued in Chapter IV that *–and(e* and *–lych(e* are normally disyllabic on monosyllabic stem.[126] Accordingly, I discount the following 16 instances in which disyllabic pronunciation of these suffixes can create the obligatory long dip and thereby render the verse metrical:

Þen grene aumayl on golde	glowande bryȝter	(236)
A schelde and a scharp spere	schinande bryȝt	(269)
Bende his bresed broȝez	blycande grene	(305)
Þat sete on hym semly	wyth saylande skyrtez	(865)
Þenne he carped to þe knyȝt	criande loude	(1088)
With mony leude ful lyȝt	and lemande torches	(1119)
Loude he watz ȝayned	with ȝarande speche	(1724)
Bryddez busken to bylde	and bremlych syngen	(509)
Knyȝtez ful cortays	and comlych ladies	(539)
His leges lapped in stel	with luflych greuez	(575)
Queme quyssewes þen	þat coyntlych closed	(578)
At þis cause þe knyȝt	comlyche hade	(648)
And couertorez ful curious	with comlych panez	(855)
And he sete in that settel	semlych ryche	(882)
And comaundez me to that cortays	your comlych fere	(2411)
With glopnyng of þat ilke gome	þat gostlych speked	(2461)

As I have argued, the suffixes *–and(e* or *–lych(e* are exploited in the b-verse to create a trisyllabic (instead of disyllabic) adjective where the metre requires one, and, in the case of a *–lych(e* adjective, it occurs almost always where the sounding of final *–e* in *–lych(e* is also grammatically justified (i.e. weak or plural adjective). I want to re-emphasise this point, as it is particularly relevant to one of Duggan's b-verse rules.

His b-verse rules are suspended only when the first b-verse stress falls on the first syllable of a disyllabic adjective[127] which is immediately followed by a noun with stress on its first syllable. B-verses with this syntactic pattern can, he argues, have an

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[124] See 4.1 above.
[125] For mute stave, see also 2.7 above.
[126] For *–ly* and *–lych(e* adjective and adverbs, see 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, especially, pp. 159-60 and pp. 171-2; for present participle *–and(e*, see 4.3.3.
[127] I included in the list 'enbrauded' (2028b), which, though trisyllabic, is stressed on its second syllable.

alternate rhythm (i.e. (x)/x/(x)).[128] Accordingly, I discount such b-verses, which are listed below (17 lines):

And fer ouer þe French flod	Felix Brutus	(13)
With rych reuel oryȝt	and rechles merþes	(40)
For þer þe fest watz ilyche ful	fiften dayes	(44)
Þer hales in at þe halle dor	an aghlich mayster	(136)
Bot in his on honde he hade	a holyn bobbe	(206)
Hit arn aboute on þis bench	bot berdlez chylder	(280)
To þe comlych quene	wyth cortays speche	(469)
Mo nyȝtez þen innoghe	in naked rokkez	(730)
Sturne, stif on þe stryþþe	on stalworth schonkez	(846)
Þat alle prys and prowes	and pured þewes	(912)
Þe tweyne yȝen and the nase	þe naked lyppez	(962)
To daly with derely	your daynté wordez	(1253)
Endured for her drury	dulful stoundez	(1517)
Wakned bi woȝez	waxen torches	(1650)
And haue no men wyth no malez	with menskful þingez	(1809)
Aboute beten and bounden	enbrauded semez	(2028)
And ruȝe knokled knarrez	with knorned stonez	(2166)

It is worth pointing out that nearly all the disyllabic adjectives above are plural and therefore the sounding of final *–e* can, in these adjectives, be grammatically justified. This would render most of the b-verses above metrical.

Also discounted are b-verses in which syncope (of *–ed* or *–es* inflexional ending on a disyllabic stem) or elision can be assumed (6 lines):

Vpon such a dere day	er hym deuised were	(92)
Þat bede þe þis buffet	quat-so bifallez after	(382)
And þat is þe best, be my dome,	for me byhouez nede	(1216)
And þus he bourded aȝayn	with mony a blyþe laȝter	(1217)[129]
For þat durst I not do	lest I deuayed were	(1493)
Dele here his deuocioun	on þe deuelez wyse	(2192)[130]

[128] Duggan, 'Metre', 231.

[129] Unless one assumes elision between '-ny' and the following indefinite article 'a', the b-verse will have a four-syllable dip, which is unmetrical by my rule.

Thus, in *Sir Gawain*:

Unmetrical b-verses: 4.40% (89 instances in 2025 lines, including 4 possible instances of a mute stave)

Excluded from the count are b-verses involving:

(1) *–and(e* or *–lych(e* (16 lines)
(2) disyllabic adjective + noun (17 lines)
(3) syncope or elision (6 lines)

Cleanness has 75 unmetrical b-verses (4.14%),[131] and has 17 b-verses which involve a disyllabic adjective + noun[132] and 15 *–and(e* or *–lych(e.*[133] *Patience* has 18 unmetrical b-verses (3.39%)[134] and 9 b-verses with disyllabic adjective + noun[135] and 2 with *–lych(e.*[136] *SE* has only 3 unmetrical b-verses as they stand (0.85%),[137] and 5 with disyllabic adjective + noun[138] and 2 with *–and(e.*[139] The fact that over 99% of the b-verses in *SE* follow the b-verse rhythmic rules strongly supports my argument that the spelling of this text reflects the metre very accurately.

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[130] Monosyllabic pronunciation of the stem in 'deuelez' can be assumed in view of such spellings as 'dele' (2188).
[131] B-verses with no long dip (71 lines): 22, 38, 48, 123, 131, 159, 164, 218, 225, 243, 244, 276, 332, 407, 412, 448 (a possible instance of a mute stave), 572, 618, 641, 653, 668, 674, 684, 766, 782, 787, 790, 794, 805, 810, 906, 917, 1018, 1040, 1041, 1065, 1134, 1186, 1205, 1215, 1220, 1227, 1269, 1286, 1294, 1315, 1361, 1366, 1371, 1403, 1432, 1456, 1466, 1489, 1516, 1558, 1562, 1570, 1571, 1583, 1585, 1594, 1671, 1672, 1692, 1699, 1736, 1737, 1751, 1795, 1810; b-verses with two long dips (4 lines): 1020, 1092, 1293, 1781.
[132] i.e. 181, 188, 512, 541, 789, 855, 884, 885, 983, 1244, 1360, 1491, 1545, 1605, 1625, 1730, 1775.
[133] *-and(e* (10 lines): 179, 324, 382, 404, 413, 429, 846, 950, 953, 1211; *-lych(e* (5 lines): 265, 310, 809, 939, 1247.
[134] B-verses with no long dip (14 lines): 118, 137, 163, 166, 178, 230, 247, 269, 297, 398, 410, 411, 447, 491; those with two long dips (4 lines): 61, 432, 499, 518.
[135] i.e. 62, 77, 82, 143, 170, 196, 197, 306, 341.
[136] i.e. 214, 337.
[137] i.e. 7 ('in Hengyst dawes'), 30 ('in Saxon londes'), and 264 ('and last so longe'), all of which can be easily emended to *Hengyste(s) dawes, in Saxones londes* (cf. *SE* 24b 'in Saxones tyme'), and *and laste so longe.* I have not included as irregularities b-verses in which the sounding of etymological or grammatical *–e*s renders them metrically regular: 74 ('quontysë'), 78 ('gownë'), 97 ('stodë'), 101 ('nournë'), 104 ('morë'), 117 ('day-bellë'), 154 ('myndë'), 166 ('haldë'), 208 ('aghtenë'), 233 ('wrathë'), 254 ('kenë'), 277 ('psalmydë'), 303 ('solempnë'), 305 ('sikë').
[138] i.e. 40, 77, 132, 216, 229.

5.10 Summary

To follow is a table giving the number of lines and their percentage in relation to the total number of lines in a given poem for the eight different metrical features discussed above, specifically:

(1) Non-*aa/ax* alliterative patterns (other than *aa/aa*);

(2) The crowded a-verse with the *(a)ax* pattern, in which pre-caesural stress falls on a non-alliterating open-class word with consequent stress-subordination of the first alliterating open-class word at verse opening;

(3) The crowded a-verse with the *(a)aa* or *(a)ax* pattern in which pre-caesural stress falls on a disyllabic or trisyllabic non-derivative adverb;

(4) The crowded a-verse with the *(a)aa* or *(a)ax* pattern in which pre-caesural stress falls on a closed-class word;

(5) a) Adjective + noun combinations at verse-opening;
b) Of which those with double alliteration;[140]
c) Of which those which show disjunction between alliteration and stress;[141]

(6) a) Adjective + noun combinations at pre-caesura;
b) Of which those with double alliteration;
c) Of which those which show disjunction between alliteration and stress;

(7) Verb + derivative adverb combinations;

(8) 'Compound'-noun phrases.

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[139] i.e. 87 ('blysnandë'), 314 ('lauandë').

[140] For 5b and 6b, I give the number of lines in which an A + N combination with double alliteration occurs and their percentage in relation to the total number of lines in which a combination (whether with double or single alliteration) occurs.

[141] For 5c and 6c, I give the number of lines in which a combination with single alliteration shows disjunction between alliteration and stress and their percentage in relation to the total number of lines in which a combination with single alliteration occurs.

Table 1: Occurrences of 8 different metrical features

	SG 2025 lines	*C* 1812 lines	*P* 531 lines	*SE* 352 lines	*WA* 2093 lines	*DT* 2046 lines
1 (lines)	186	49	11	12		
(%)	9.19	2.70	2.07	3.41		
2 (lines)	28	15	4	4	12	0
(%)	1.38	0.83	0.75	1.14	0.57	0
3 (lines)	45	29	5	6	9	0
(%)	2.22	1.60	0.94	1.70	0.91	0
4 (lines)	22	21	2	5	10	0
(%)	1.09	1.16	0.38	1.42	0.48	0
5						
a) (lines)	122	92	27	20	88	79
(%)	6.02	5.08	5.08	5.68	4.20	3.86
b) (lines)	72	58	16	12	42	19
(%)	59.02	63.74	59.26	60.00	47.73	24.05
c) (lines)	27	13	4	5	29	28
(%)	54.00	38.24	36.36	62.50	63.04	46.67
6						
a) (lines)	145	116	34	39	227	92
(%)	7.16	6.24	6.40	11.08	10.85	4.50
b) (lines)	33	30	6	10	40	0 (exc. 1?)
(%)	22.76	25.86	17.65	25.64	17.62	0
c) (lines)	38	31	9	6	24	0 (exc. 1?)
(%)	33.93	36.05	32.14	20.69	12.83	0
7 (lines)	39	29	7	7	33	1 (?)
(%)	1.93	1.60	1.32	1.99	1.58	0.05
8 (lines)	16	24	5	3	20	1 (?)
(%)	0.79	1.32	0.94	0.85	0.96	0.05
total (%)	199.49	184.42	163.29	196.10	160.77	79.18

In table 1, the total percentages (which add up each percentage for 8 different features) are also given for each poem. To follow is a table giving the number of lines and their percentages in relation to the total number of lines in a given poem for unmetrical a- and b-verses:

Table 2: Occurrences of unmetrical a- and b-verses

	SG 2025 lines	*C* 1812 lines	*P* 531 lines	*SE* 352 lines	*WA* 2093 lines	*DT* 2046 lines
unmetrical a-verse (lines)	15	10	2	0	2	23
(%)	0.74	0.55	0.38	0	0.10	1.12
unmetrical b-verse (lines)	89	75	18	3		
(%)	4.40	4.14	3.39	0.85		

The ingenuities of *Sir Gawain* become particularly obvious not so much by the comparison of individual metrical features as by that of the total percentages. *Sir Gawain* and *SE* are the highest in the total percentage (199.44% and 196.10% respectively), which are closely followed by *Cleanness* (184.42%), and then by *Patience* (163.29%). It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the *Gawain* poet (especially in *Sir Gawain*) and the *Erkenwald* poet were more prepared to exploit the various possibilities of the metre. However, it is worth emphasising that the metrical ingenuities, which, at least at first glance, appear to characterise and distinguish *Sir Gawain* from the other poems concerned, are in fact shared by all the poems except *DT*. In other words, they are, in fact, not *breaches* of rules as understood, but *variations* on those rules individually exercised, but collectively more present in the more imaginative handling of metre in *Sir Gawain* than in other poems, particularly *WA* and *DT*. It is also important to remember that the pre-caesural position, especially when it occurs with the shared grammatical patterns—i.e. with pre-caesural disyllabic (or trisyllabic) non-derivative adverbs or closed-class words with syntactic inversion—is the one least susceptible to scribal intervention in the a-verse. Bearing these points in mind, the regularity or irregularity in alliterative patterning seems to be no good grounds upon which to conclude that the texts of *Cleanness* and *Patience* are close to the original, but

that of *Sir Gawain* is not.

As for the unmetrical a-verses, the figures are revealing: all the poems present much lower figures (0.74%, 0,55%, 0.38%, etc.) than those for unmetrical b-verses (4.40%, 4.14%, 3.39%, etc.). Considering the fact that Duggan allows about 2 percent of b-verses in the manuscripts of his first corpus to violate the rule against two strong dips in the b-verse (though neither the rule against no long dip (i.e. verses lacking a long dip either before or after the first b-verse stress) nor the one against the line-terminal strong dip is included in the count),[142] these figures support even more strongly the proposed rule for the a-verse.

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[142] 'Fewer than 2 percent of the b-verses in the manuscripts of the first corpus violate the rule against two strong dips...' (Duggan, 'Final *–e* '), 142. Duggan excludes, as I do, from the count those b-verses which are unmetrical as they stand, but which can be restored to regular b-verse rhythms by assuming stress doublets, syncope, elision, syneresis, contraction, and apocope; cf. :'Some irregularities are no more than apparent, for scribal spellings occasionally suggest additional unstressed syllables in both inflectional endings and derivational affixes which must have been long before syncopated in the poets' dialects' ('The Shape of the B-verse', 591).

CHAPTER VI

THE EXPLOITATION OF METRE FOR STYLISTIC PURPOSES

The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature, one of the recently published books treating the general history of Middle English literature, has one chapter on alliterative verse. Its title ('Alliterative Poetry') reflects the author Ralph Hanna's opinion of the inappropriateness of the term 'The Revival'.[1] As he points out, this refers exclusively to poems produced between 1350 and 1415 and written in unrhymed alliterative long lines, and excludes, for instance, thirteen-line alliterative stanzas. In this sense, 'The Revival' is more exclusive than comprehensive in its implication, obscuring the variety of Middle English alliterative poetry. More relevant to my study in this chapter, however, is his contention that the phrase 'The Revival' 'presupposes that scholars know clearly what alliteration is and how it is used in Middle English literary culture'.[2] This remark immediately raises another question: can we even say that we know clearly the nature and functions of alliteration in poems of 'The Revival', let alone in Middle English literary culture as a whole? How the alliterative poets used alliteration is a fundamental question. Alliteration, having lost all its expressive power, may function just as the form of a poem; subtleties and implications of a poem may be conveyed by other means than alliteration; alternatively, alliteration in some poems may be closely linked to the content of a poem so that the metre and the content work to create various artistic effects.

As Duggan himself points out, one must not assume homogeneity in style among poets; individual poets might well have handled certain aspects of the metre in different ways.[3] And there is little doubt that alliteration was one of those aspects that were open

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[1] Hanna, R. III., 'Alliterative Poetry', *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. David A. Wallace (Cambridge, 1999), 488-512. On the alliterative revival, see N. F. Blake, 'Middle English Alliterative Revivals', *Review* 1 (1979), 205-14; E. Salter, 'The Alliterative Revival', *Modern Philology* 64 (1966-7), 146-50, 233-7; D. Pearsall, 'The Alliterative Revival: Origins and Social Backgrounds', in *Middle English Alliterative Poetry and its Literary Background: Seven Essays*, ed. D. Lawton (Cambridge, 1982), 34-53; J. A. W. Bennett, 'Survival and Revivals of Alliterative Modes', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s. 14 (1983), 26-43.

[2] *Op. cit.*, 488.

[3] 'In arguing as I do that in something as basic to the form of alliterative verses as the distribution of alliterating staves the poems are probably alike, I would not be taken to argue for absolute homogeneity in other matters. There are obvious stylistic differences distinguishing the works of each poet, just as there are differences in the iambic verse of Shakespeare and Milton' (Duggan, 'Alliterative Patterning',

to such stylistic variations. It is indeed likely that imaginative poets—among whom is certainly the *Gawain* poet—exploited the metre for stylistic opportunities to refine and enrich their narratives.

No one denies the outstanding literary merit of the three alliterative poems by the *Gawain* poet; but full appreciation of their literary merit also requires an understanding of metre and its various possibilities. Critics, including Borroff, J. Turville-Petre, and Duggan, have so far tended to think of the line as the maximum unit of metre. In discussions on alliterative metre in the past, lines were analysed in isolation, outside the larger unit in which they occur. However, the deployment of his metre by this highly imaginative poet becomes even more evident when one considers his lines, not in isolation from neighbouring lines, but as a part of, and closely connected to, a larger unit, which extends beyond the line.[4] I also believe that metrical study which considers sequences of lines rather than isolated ones will give us a broader vision of the alliterative metre and provide a more integrated account of that metre and its functions. I therefore propose a new orientation in metrical study.

Accordingly, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss the potential of the alliterative metre for aesthetic effects that enhance and refine the narrative, and thereby to demonstrate the way its various possibilities are brought into play by this versatile poet. I shall examine the following five metrical/stylistic practices which appear to characterize the metre of the three Cotton Nero poems and distinguish it from that of many other poems in the tradition:

(1) a metrical practice of what I call *supplementary alliteration*, that is, cross-line alliterative patterns, not dictated by the metre, which serve to give alliterative prominence to words which do not alliterate line-internally, but carry considerable semantic relevance in context;
(2) the exploitation of the (usually) non-alliterating last stave for various effects;
(3) the artful handling of lines in which the established pattern of weight of information content in the two half-lines is reversed, and in which the new or operative information occurs in the b-verse rather than the a-verse;
(4) the adaptation of alliteration to direct speech;
(5) the effective use of redundancies.

82, n. 19).

[4] E. G. Stanley expresses a similar view in his analysis of iambic poems; see 'Chaucer's Metre after Chaucer, I: Chaucer to Hoccleve', *N & Q* 234 (1989), 11-23.

These devices generally work together to add subtlety and depth to a given context, and it is not always easy to treat them separately. For this reason, I will present below, not only passages that demonstrate these features individually, but also ones in which two or more of them are combined. Later in the chapter, I will also examine the metre of *St Erkenwald*—a poem once attributed to the *Gawain* poet—because the *Erkenwald* poet seems to be the only other alliterative poet who equals the *Gawain* poet in his skilful handling of the metre (though not necessarily for the same effects).

6.1 Supplementary alliteration

The following is a typical instance of supplementary alliteration:[5]

> Ȝet laft he not þe lace, þe ladiez ***gifte***,
> Þat **forgat** not **Gawayn** for **gode** of hymseluen. (*SG* 2030-1)

Alliterative stress (i.e. stress accompanied by alliteration) normally falls on words that are semantically important in context. They are usually open-class words: nouns, adjectives, adverbs, or verbs. However, a contextually important word occurring at the last stave (in this case, 'gifte') will not normally alliterate. In such a case, this poet seems to provide the word with compensatory alliterative prominence by translinear alliteration—i.e. by making the significant but non-alliterating word set the alliterative sound for the next line or repeat the one in the preceding line. The phenomenon of a non-alliterating word at the last stave setting the alliterative sound for the next line is also found in other poets in the tradition; in fact, J. P. Oakden regards such instances as evidence of a continuity between OE and ME alliterative verse.[6] In the instances outside the three Cotton Nero poems,[7] however, such alliteration appears to be, if not accidental, ornamental, used to please the listening ear and/or the reading eye, and not a marker of the contextual importance of a word occurring outside the line-internal alliteration. Moreover, the metrical practice which Oakden mentions in his discussion refers only to consecutive lines in which it is always the non-alliterating fourth stress in

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[5] Bolds and italics are mine. They indicate alliterating and non-alliterating stressed words respectively.
[6] J. P. Oakden, *Alliterative Poetry in Middle English*, vol. 1, 154. For the view that Middle English alliterative verse represents a new beginning after the end the tradition of classical Old English poetry, see T. Turville-Petre, *The Alliterative Revival*, 16-7.
[7] *St Erkenwald* may, as I have already mentioned, be the only exception.

the first line that sets the alliterative sound for the next line, whereas the one which I here call supplementary (or translinear) alliteration is triggered not only by the last stave (as demonstrated in the lines quoted above), but can, as I shall demonstrate later, involve any other stave lacking line-internal alliteration in two consecutive lines. It is worth emphasising here that what distinguishes the *Gawain* poet from many other alliterative poets is his sense of alliteration: for this poet, alliteration is, as we shall see shortly, a vital instrument to highlight a word which is of considerable semantic relevance in the narrative; and the alliteration for this purpose is not necessarily line-internal, but can take place across the line. Translinear alliteration, therefore, is his self-conscious attempt to bestow compensatory alliterative emphasis on a word which is contextually significant but does not alliterate line-internally. Let us now look at a couple of passages from *Cleanness* and examine when and how this technique is exploited by the poet.

Like *Patience*, *Cleanness* is a homily, in which the virtue of *clanness* is exemplified by three major stories from the Old Testament—the Flood, the Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Belshazzar's Feast—all illustrating the opposite vice, *fylþe*, or impurity. The following passage is taken from the first major exemplum, the story of Noah. God tells Noah that he will cause a flood as a punishment for the filth of man:

'Enter in þenn,' quoþ he, 'and haf þi wyf with þe,
Þy þre sune3 withouten þrep, and her þre wyue3;
Beste3, as I bedene haue, bosk þerinne als,
And when 3e arn **staued styfly,** **steke3** yow þerinne.
Fro seuen daye3 ben seyed I sende out bylyue
Such a rowtande ryge þat rayne schal swyþe,
Þat schal wasch alle þe worlde of werke3 of *fylþe*;
Schal no **flesch** vpon **folde** by **fonden** on lyue,
Outtaken yow a3t in þis ark ***staued***,
And sed þat I wyl saue of þyse ser beste3.'
Now Noe neuer ***stynte3***—þat niy3t he bygynne3—
Er al wer **stawed** and **stoken** as þe **steuen** wolde. (*C* 349-60)

As I have indicated, the poet encourages the virtue of cleanness by three major exempla featuring the sin of *fylþe*. He thus develops his argument by making his audience constantly aware of the antithetical relationship between cleanness and uncleanness.

Fylþe is therefore one of the most important 'key' terms in this poem,[8] and occurs almost always line-internally, with alliterative stress. Line 355 is a rare instance in which *fylþe* occurs at the non-alliterating last stave; but it gains compensatory alliterative emphasis through translinear alliteration, whereby its contextual significance is even further foregrounded. The editorial semicolon after line 355 indicates a rather strong syntactic break between lines 355 and 356. However, the technique of supplementary alliteration serves to suggest, through an alliterative link between the two lines, a semantic relation between 'fylþe' and 'flesch', words which in fact belong to different syntactic and metrical units. Moreover, the translinear alliteration of 'fylþe' and 'flesch' creates a connection between the key words of the two lines, associating 'wasch' and 'flesch'. As a result, the causal relationship between the filth of the flesh and the flood is metrically foregrounded. Furthermore, by underlining the causal relationship between man's sin ('werkeȝ of fylþe') and God's vengeance ('wasch alle þe worlde'), the poet implicitly explains and justifies God's harsh punishment. The supplementary alliteration thus serves to enhance the homiletic message.

The non-alliterating word 'stynteȝ' at 359 is also worth a few remarks. Supplementary alliteration is triggered not only by the last stave, but can involve other staves lacking line-internal alliteration. Again, alliteration functions to signal the contextual significance of the key word: 'stynteȝ', with a translinear alliterative link with stressed words in the next line, serves to emphasise Noah's immediate response and obedience to God; the collocation of 'stynteȝ', 'stawed', and 'stoken' echoes lines 352 ('staued', 'steke3') and 357 ('staued'). The collocations in lines 359-60 imply that Noah, who distinguishes the clean from the unclean and guides the chosen creatures into the sacred ark, is God's agent, the one who fulfils God's 'steuen'. The metre and the context work together to create an association for *clanness* that pervades the poem: instant and willing obedience to God's ordinance.

In another passage, the poet uses the device of supplementary alliteration to highlight man's sin:

> Þer watȝ no law to hem layd bot loke to ***kynde***,
> And **kepe** to hit and alle hit **cors** **clanly** ***fulfylle***.
> And þenne **founden** þay fylþe in **fleschlych** dedeȝ, 265
> And **controeued** agayn **kynde** **contrare** werkeȝ,

[8] I will henceforth use the term 'key' for words or phrases which the poet seems to be treating with special care and also with some poetic effects in mind.

And vsed hem vnþryftyly vchon on oþer,
And als with oþer, wylsfully, upon a wrange wyse. (*C* 263-8)

Here, the poet specifically defines the sin of filth as unnatural sexual activity. The non-alliterating 'kynde' ('nature') at 263, therefore, would ideally receive alliterative prominence, which it indirectly gains through translinear alliteration. This in turn creates a phonetic link between 'kynde' at 263 and 'clanly' at 264, reinforcing the theological point: in the pre-Mosaic age, man can be clean in the eyes of God only if he follows the laws of *kynde*. At line 265, however, the topic shifts from cleanness to uncleanness. Interestingly enough, 'fulfylle' at 264 anticipates the alliterative sound of the next line, in which such negative terms as 'fleschlych' and 'fylþe' occur. 'Fulfylle' *syntactically* belongs to the domain of cleanness, but *phonetically* anticipates the contravention of the rule, the uncleanness of humans. The alliterative link created by the translinear alliteration involving 'fulfylle' serves to underline the contrast and the interrelatedness between the first two lines and the following lines. Their antithetical relationship becomes even more marked at 266, which alliterates on /k/. In lines 263-4, 'kynde' is collocated with such terms as 'kepe' and 'clanly' to indicate faithfulness and cleanness; whereas at 266, it is linked with 'controeued' and 'contrare', which produce negative associations with disobedience and unfaithfulness. The alliterative sound shifts /k/—/f/—/f/—/k/, forming a chiastic pattern, mirroring the emphases of the content: natural—clean—unclean—unnatural. It is also worth noting that in Parts I (in which the poet recounts the first major story of the Flood) and II (the Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah), the majority of words that alliterate on */k/* (e.g. *clanness*, *cortaysye*, *kind(ly)*, *cler*, *court*, *Cryst*, *kingdom*, *comly*, *Creator*, *comfort*, etc.) carry positive associations and thereby serve to enrich the idea of cleanness through a set of varied collocations.[9] The collocation at 266 is thus not only contrastive to that of 263-4 but also 'unnatural': it deviates from the internal norm the poet has been building up in the poem, and thus betrays the expectations of the audience/reader.

In the following passage, the narrator relates how God, infuriated by the filth of humans, took his vengeance upon them and destroyed them:

Syþen þe soueraỹn in sete so sore forþo3t
Þat euer he man vpon molde merked to lyuy.

[9] See Chapter I in Noriko Inoue, 'Functions and Effects of the Alliterative Metre in *Cleanness*', Unpublished MA Dissertation (University of Bristol, 1998); there I closely examine 'key words' and their distribution in the long line.

For he in **fylþe** wat3 **fallen,** **felly** he ***uenged***,
Quen **fourferde** alle þe **flesch** þat he **formed** hade. (*C* 557-60)

In this passage, 'fylþe' is not only collocated with 'fallen' and 'felly' but also echoed in 'uenged' by voiced/unvoiced alliteration, which I will henceforth call 'loose alliteration'.[10] Though 'uenged' does signal the line-end with its different consonant introducing the stressed syllable, its phonetic closeness to the sound of the preceding alliterating syllables suggests a semantic relation with them. Or rather, the poet *creates* such a relation by means of loose alliteration. 'Uenged' also serves as a link between lines 559 and 560, both alliterating on /f/. The key terms thus form an associative link: *fylþe* of sin, and God's *vengeance* and destruction of all human *flesch*. It is worth pointing out that *flesch* is strongly associated with sin and filth in this poem and almost always refers to human flesh or unclean creature(s) (e.g. 202, 269, 303, 356, 403, 560, etc.). The poet never employs *flesch* in reference to God, Christ, and anyone consecrated to God, for whom the term *body* is specially reserved (e.g. 11, 32, etc.). Therefore, the cross-line collocation between 'fylþe' and 'flesch' here accords with the internal norm the poet builds up in the poem.

Let us then examine a passage in which translinear and loose alliteration combine to bring about subtle effects in context. The following lines, taken from the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, relate how Lot is rescued by the angels from the Sodomites surrounding him and demanding his guests:

Bot þat þe 3onge men so 3epe 3ornen ***þeroute,***
Wapped vpon þe wyket and wonnen hem tylle,
And by þe honde3 hym hent and horyed hym ***withinne,***
And steken þe 3ates ston-harde wyth stalworth ***barre3***.
Þay **blwe a boffet in blande** þat **banned** ***peple,***
Þat þay **blustered as blynde** **as Bayard** wat3 euer. (*C* 881-6)

Garment elsewhere figures as a measure of cleanness and uncleanness in this poem (e.g. 12, 114, 115, 145). This garment imagery tends to occur in combination with the concept of 'enclosure' (334, 1070, 1655), expressed most frequently by the term *clos*.[11]

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[10] I am adopting a term used by Mick Short, *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose* (London and New York, 1996), 108.

[11] See also the section 'The Garment and the Concepts of "Enclosure" and "Exclusion"' in Chapter II of my MA dissertation.

In the exemplum of Noah, the poet exploits a variation of these images to represent the Ark as a place enclosed with holiness (e.g. 310, 346, etc.)—in other words, protected by God because of its *clannesse*. Later, *clos* at 1088 refers to the 'bos' ('cow stall') where Christ was born, and thus has its spiritual significance reinforced. *Clos* frequently implies exclusion of dirt, and is contrastively related to such terms as *flemus* or *fleme(z)*, *schowued*, *remued*, and *outkast*. As there is a set of negative key words associated with filth and sin (e.g. *fylþe*, *falce*, and *faut*), so the idea of 'exclusion' is seen throughout the poem as a fixed norm signalling the fate of the unclean by contrast with the clean. The wedding guest in dirty clothes is excluded from God's feast (ll. 153-60); Lucifer from heaven (ll. 219-23); Adam and Eve from paradise (ll. 241-46); fallen men from the ark (ll. 325-32); the Sodomites from the face of the earth (ll. 907-12). It is worth noting, therefore, that at 839 ('With kene clobbeȝ of þat clos þay clater on þe woweȝ'), the residence of Lot is also referred to as a 'clos': Lot's residence is a sanctuary protecting clean Lot and his family from the unclean Sodomites, just as the Ark is for Noah. In the above passage, the symbolic acts of 'enclosing' and 'excluding', which distinguish the clean from the unclean, are performed by the angels. The polarised positions are emphasised by the contrasting adverbs 'þeroute' (881) and 'withinne' (883). The act of closing the gate with 'barreȝ', representing exclusion, carries special emphasis because 'barreȝ' gains compensatory metrical prominence through a translinear alliterative link with 'blwe', 'boffet', and 'banned' in the next line. Furthermore, 'peple' in the same line, which echoes the /b/ words through loose alliteration (of the voiced and unvoiced bilabial plosives), serves as a pivot to link the two lines together, thus creating three lines connected through a series of alliterative sounds /b/-/p/-/b/. As was the case with 'uenged' between *f*-terms ('fylþe', 'fallen', and 'felly' at 559, and 'fourferde', 'flesch', and 'formed' at 560) in the previous example, 'peple' here serves, with its almost identical but still distinct sound quality, to create a continuity between the adjacent /b/ terms: the unclean 'peple' are not only those who cause God's *anger* and *violence*, suggested by 'blwe' and 'boffet'; they are also *blind* and *foolish*, just as Bayard is. These are all the negative forces that filth entails. Thus, by taking advantage of loose alliteration as well as translinear alliteration, the poet can create a series of associations between filth, and God's anger, blindness, and folly.

6.2 The exploitation of the last stave

In her *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: A Stylistic and Metrical Study*, Borroff argued, on the basis of previous studies by August Brink, that the last stave,[12] normally non-alliterating, serves as a marker of the stylistic value of a word in that position; in other words, the stylistic value of a word occurring at an alliterating position is 'high', and its meaning is 'elevated', whereas if a word occurs at the last stave, its stylistic value is 'low', and its meaning is 'colloquial'.[13] Borroff also pointed out a few instances in which the poet seems to be heightening an ironical effect by placing in the last stave a word with a high stylistic value. Although she does thus suggest the potential for artistic exploitation of the last stave, the focus of her argument is the relationship between alliterating and non-alliterating words and their stylistic values. T. Turville-Petre has pointed out that since the function of alliteration is to unite the two half-lines, if the head stave of the b-verse joins the alliteration, there is no logical reason for the last stave to do so.[14] His view that the last stave serves the pragmatic purpose of signalling the line-end also implies a minor role played by the last stave. In the mid 1980s, Duggan analysed the rhythmic structure of the b-verse and discovered metrical rules restricting the distribution of stressed and unstressed syllables in the second half-line.[15] Restrictions in rhythm involve syntactic restrictions, and these constraints suggest that the rules of alliterative metre were in fact stricter than had been thought. His discovery thus seems to strengthen the traditional view that while the a-verse gives 'new' information[16] by opening a statement, the b-verse is semantically less important than the first half-line, playing reiterating, elaborative, transitional, or space-filling functions. Such b-verses are abundant in, for instance, *The Destruction of Troy*:

> The noise was full noble of notes to here,
> Thurgh myrth and melody made vppon lofte.
> To this soueraÿne Citie þat yet was olofte,
> Jason [a]ioynid and his iust fferis,
> Steppit vp to a streite streght on his gate. (*DT* 347-51)

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12 She does not use the term 'last stave'; she calls it 'the final position'.
13 Borroff, 52.
14 T. Turville-Petre, *The Alliterative Revival*, 17.
15 See Duggan, 'The Shape of the B-Verse', 564-92.
16 I am adopting a term used by Quirk et. al. in *CGEL*, 1360.

None of the above b-verses is needed to make sense of the lines quoted.[17] Also, the words occurring at the last stave (e.g. 'here', 'lofte', etc.) carry less semantic weight than other line-internal stressed words, thus aptly showing that unlike rhymed verse (where the metrical thrust is towards the end of the line), the unrhymed alliterative long lines have a structure in which the last stave is normally metrically the least prominent position.

The b-verse in the Cotton Nero poems is not an exception: such b-verses as described above do occur. But what distinguishes the *Gawain* poet from the *DT* poet and many other alliterative poets is that he is taking advantage of the nature of the non-alliterating last stave and exploiting the position in a much more positive and effective way than Borroff suggests. Let us then examine examples in which the last stave, together with supplementary alliteration, is exploited for narrative purposes. The following passage is taken from the poem's introduction, in which the beatific vision is promised to the clean:

> Me myneȝ on one amonge oþer, as Maþew recordeȝ,
> Þat þus of **clannesse vncloseȝ** a ful **cler** speche:
> 'Þe **haþel** ***clene*** of his **hert** **hapeneȝ** ful ***fayre***,
> For he schal loke on oure lorde with a loue chere.' (*C* 25-8)

As I have already pointed out, one of the poet's purposes in this poem is to construct a field of meaning for *clene*, through a set of varied collocations. A group of terms (mainly adjectives), all recurrent throughout the poem, serve to enrich and expand the concept of cleanness: *pure*, *honest*, *comly*, *cortayse*, *bryȝt*, *dere*, *aþel*, *semly*, *wlonk*, *rich(e)*, *fair(e)*, etc.[18] Normally, alliterative collocations reinforce the association between such *clene*-related words, as is the case with 'clannesse' and 'cler' at 26 above. But the last stave can be used to include a recurrent key term which *does not* alliterate line-internally, and at 27, the last stave serves this purpose for the non-alliterating 'fayre'. This term and another stressed but non-alliterating key word, 'clene', in the a-verse strengthen each other's meaning, with resultant increased prominence upon 'clene'. But since 'clene' carries, in this poem, more contextual significance than 'fayre', the lack of alliterative prominence on the former is (at 27) compensated for by

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[17] For full discussion of the *DT*-poet's techniques of translation, see D. Lawton, '*The Destruction of Troy* as Translation from Latin Prose: Aspects of Form and Style', *Studia Neophilologica*, 52 (1980), 259-70; see also 'The Middle English Alliterative *Alexander A* and *C*: Form and Style in Translation from Latin Prose', *Studia Neophilologica* 53 (1981), 259-267.

[18] See also Inoue, Chapter I.

translinear alliteration; also interesting to note is the fact that the cross-line alliteration here connects that key term with the *preceding* line rather than (as is more usual) the following one. Once again, translinear alliteration serves to signal the contextual significance of a word which does not alliterate line-internally. In this way, the technique of supplementary alliteration is here combined with the exploitation of the last stave so that the poet can more ambitiously explore the semantic complexity of the central concept of this poem.

Another fine example of the combined use of supplementary alliteration and the last stave can be observed in the following passage:

> Þenne vch wyȝe may wel wyt þat he þe wlonk ***louies***.
> And if he **louyes *clene* layk** þat is oure **lorde *ryche*,**
> And to be **couþe** in his **courte** þou **coueytes** þenne,
> To se þat semly in sete and his swete face,
> Clerrer counsayl con I non bot þat þou clene worþe. (*C* 1052-6)

As was the case with 'clene' at 27 above, that key term here is (at 1053) given compensatory alliterative emphasis by translinear alliteration, with a resultant phonetic link with the following line. Here again the supplementary alliteration serves to suggest the contextual importance of the key adjective which does not join the line-internal alliteration. As with 'clene' and 'fayre' above, the poet again (at 1053) exploits the last stave to include the non-alliterating 'ryche', another recurring key word in this poem. In lines 1052-3, compensatory alliterative prominence is also bestowed on the non-alliterating 'louies' at the last stave in line 1052; that term is immediately repeated at the verse-opening stave (i.e. the first ictus position in the line) in the following line. The repeated 'louies' ('louyes') thus serves to stress God's positive response to the *clene*. In this way, the technique of supplementary alliteration (through which the key words 'clene' and 'louies' gain compensatory alliterative emphasis), together with the exploitation of the last stave (by which 'ryche' at the last stave is given positive associations through its link to 'clene'), serves metrically to mirror the logic hidden in the if-clause at 1053: it is natural that the *clene* is *loved* by God because He is *ryche*. Translinear alliteration resulting from the actual repetition of a non-alliterating last-stave word at the verse-initial stave of the following line very rarely occurs in the alliterative poems of the Cotton Nero manuscript, but when it does (as here), it has a strong emphasising function, which serves to enhance the narrative effect. A comparable example occurs in *Patience*, in which the poet illustrates the virtue of

patience by retelling the Old Testament Book of Jonah. After his refusal to obey the divine command to go to Nineveh, Jonah eventually follows God's will and preaches to the Ninevites. To see the outcome of their fate, he sits down on the ground and rests under the woodbine which God has prepared for him, but which He destroys on the next day. Jonah becomes angry with God, who responds thus:

> Ȝet oure Lorde to þe lede laused a speche:
> 'Is þis ryȝtwys, þou renk, alle þy ronk nòyse,
> So wroth for a wodbynde to wax so sone?
> Why art þou so waymot, wyȝe, for so ***lyttel***?
> 'Hit is not **lyttel**,' quoþ þe lede, 'bot lykker to ryȝt.' (*P* 489-93)

Here, the repetition of the word 'lyttel' serves to convey and emphasise Jonah's anger and rebelliousness against God.

The last stave also seems to be a position in which the poet attempts to make certain distinctions among synonymous terms for *clene*. In this poem, there are what I call 'key' terms which the poet seems to be treating with special care and also with some poetic purposes. Those which concern us here can be categorised into two groups: (1) terms like *apel*, *blype*, *comly*, *wlonk*, etc, which are restricted in collocation and *always* imply spiritual worth; (2) those like *bolde*, *bryȝt*, *cler*, *fayre*, *ryche*, etc., which, in Parts I and II, *normally* guarantee spiritual grace and thus contribute to the conflation of physical and spiritual worth, but which, in Part III (in which the poet recounts the third major story of Belshazzar's feast and the defilement of the sacred vessels), become an ambiguous marker of spiritual purity.[19] While the terms in group 1 almost always occur at a line-internal alliterating position, those in group 2, especially, *ryche* and *fayre*, occur frequently at the non-alliterating last stave in different contexts. In the example we have just seen, 'fayre' and 'ryche' at the last stave show, with reference to the clean and God respectively, a fusion of secular and spiritual approbation. On some occasions, however, these normally positive words are, in Parts I and II, used in a negative context to emphasise the viciousness of the sin of *fylþe*. The last stave 'fayre' at 270 ('How þe deȝter of þe douþe were derelych fayre'), for instance, occurring with reference to Adam's descendants who give birth to 'jeauntes' (272), serves to underline their sinfulness, since their beauty is devoid of holiness.

In Part III, the last stave serves, particularly, to distinguish *spiritual* beauty from

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[19] See also Chapter I in Inoue.

non-spiritual magnificence.[20] Use of the last stave for this purpose is most distinctively seen in the two descriptions of the holy vessels and the account of Belshazzar's table vessels and feast. The terms used to describe the beauty of the sacred vessels and Belshazzar's court are similar. However, a distinction must be made in their implications: required is a close attention to the order of the three descriptions (the two descriptions of the holy vessels with one description of Belshazzar's feast between), the patterns of collocation, and the contexts in which the terms are used. The two descriptions of the sacred vessels are symmetrical: both refer to the name of Solomon as the creator of the vessels (1286-1290/1453-1455), to the *sancta sanctorum* and to the respectful treatment of the vessels in the past (1269-4/1489-1492). But there are several terms which occur *only* in the two descriptions of the vessels: 'pure' (1271), 'brasse' (1271/1443), 'aþel' (1276/1443), 'schyre' (1278), 'vertuous' (1280), 'precious' (1282/1496), 'clene' (as adj. 1288/1458), 'gentyle' (1309/1495), 'schene' (1310), and 'vayled' (1311). Of these, 'pure', 'aþel', 'clene', 'schyre', and 'schene' are terms which, in Parts I and II, have been continually associated with cleanness, or *sanctified*, by being used of what has spiritual splendour and richness. In some lines of the first description, *ryche*, *schyre*, *gold*, and *fayre*, occurring at the last stave, strengthen the spiritual sense of the 'sanctified' key adjectives at a line-internal position, such as *pure*, *aþel*, *bryȝt*, *dere*, and *gentyle*:

Þe **pure** pyleres of bras	pourtrayd in *golde*	(1271)
Þat þe auter hade vpon	of **aþel** golde *ryche*	(1276)
Þe bases of þe **bryȝt** postes	and bassynes so *schyre*	(1278)
Dere desches of golde	and dubleres *fayre*	(1279)
Bot þe ioy of þe iuelrye	so **gentyle** and *ryche*	(1309)

Therefore, all the key adjectives in the first description reinforce the conflation of aesthetic beauty with holiness.

The second description, however, presents a slightly different implication from the first one; since this description is preceded by the account of Belshazzar's feast, key terms which occur in the second description become a less reliable marker of holiness. In fact, these two latter passages present great similarity in terms and collocations: 'cler' (1353,1400/1471), 'prudly' (1379/1466), 'formed' (1341/1462), 'coruen' (1382/1452),

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[20] See also Chapter IV in Inoue; there I briefly discuss the poet's exploitation of the last stave in *Cleanness*.

'koint' (1382/1483), and 'clene' (adv.1382/1455). They also have similar combinations of key terms: 'clere'/ 'bryȝt' (1400) – 'bryȝt'/ 'clere' (1456), 'blusnande'/ 'golde' (1404) – 'bryȝt'/ 'gold' (1481), 'asure'/ 'enaumayld' (1411) – 'Enaumaylde'/ 'azer' (1457). When used of Belshazzar's palace and tableware, the key terms such as 'bryȝt', 'golde', and 'clere' become *desanctifed*, and as a result express only the unspiritual beauty and glitter of their workmanship. When they are used again of the holy vessels in the second description, they occur, side by side, with such highly sanctified terms as 'presyous', 'aþel', 'clene' (adj.), and 'gent', which had occurred in the first description. Some of the lines in the second description have two adjectives, one of which occurs at the last stave:

For þer wer bassynes ful **bryȝt**	of brende golde *clere*	(1456)
Þe boȝes **bryȝt** þerabof	brayden of *golde*	(1481)
And oþer **louflych** lyȝt	þat lemed ful *fayre*	(1486)
With mony a **borlych** best	al of brende *golde*	(1488)

Importantly, 'clere', 'golde', and 'fayre' are key adjectives figuring in the account of Belshazzar and his feast. 'Clere' (or 'clernes') collocates with 'concubines':

In þe clernes of his concubines	and curious wedeȝ	(1353)
And his clere concubynes	in cloþes ful byrȝt	(1400)

And 'gold' and 'fayre' occur with reference to 'fals fantummes of fendes' (1344) and 'Babyloyn' (1378-9) respectively. These adjectives which have been associated with *non-spiritual* magnificence—and even with *flawed* secularity in the cases of *clere* and *golde*—are now placed at the last stave and used to emphasise the *holy* splendour of the vessels in the second description. They are, in effect, desanctified and resanctified to disorientating effect. The implication is subtle; while the highly elaborate description of the vessels reflects a sincere response to their material beauty and 'bryȝt', 'cler' workmanship, the poet presents a slight hint that the holy vessels are holy not necessarily by virtue of being 'bryȝt' and 'cler', which have been used of the (sinful) Belshazzar's magnificence, and that higher, spiritual beauty should be distinguished from *non-spiritual glitter*. The poet thus takes advantage of the last non-alliterating stave to create a disorientating effect, which well serves to deconstruct the previous conflation (in the first two major exempla) of secular and spiritual worth. Thus, the metrically least restricted position of the last stave allows the poet to exercise his verbal

power to manipulate the associations (with cleanness and uncleanness) of words which are broad and protean in application.

The following passage illustrates the combined exploitation of the last stave, the technique of supplementary alliteration, and the adjective + noun combination:

> For wonder wroth is þe wyȝ þat wroȝt alle þinges
> Wyth þe freke þat in fylþe folȝes hym after,
> As renkez of relygioun þat reden and syngen
> And aprochen to hys presens, and presteȝ arn called.
> Thay teen vnto his temmple and temen to hymseluen;
> Reken with reuerence þay rychen his ***auter***;
> Þay **hondel** þer his **aune** ***body***, and **vsen** hit ***boþe***. (*C* 5-11)

As I have argued in Chapter III and V above,[21] the *Gawain* poet rarely uses minor adjective like *aune* and *same* as an easy means to achieve the second alliteration. But when he does, such alliterating minor adjectives often play a significant role in some other way. Here, the poet apparently exploits the A + N combination to include the non-alliterating but contextually important word 'body', which is consistently distinguished from *flesch*. Since neither word is here required to alliterate, the choice between them is not metrically constrained. However, *flesch*, as I have already mentioned,[22] is strongly associated with sin and filth in the poem and almost always refers to human flesh or unclean creatures, while 'body' is reserved especially for God and those clean of filth (thus compatible with Him). God's clean 'body' here thus serves to *anticipate* the filth of the human flesh, the governing theme of the first two major exempla. The key word 'body', which would ideally receive alliterative stress, is thus given compensatory prominence through its alliteration with the last stave 'boþe'. Though carrying little semantic weight, the line-external 'boþe' serves to provide alliteration for the semantically prominent word.

The non-alliterating word 'auter', in line 10, is another recurrent key term used to represent man's faith to God, which is also given compensatory alliterative prominence by means of supplementary alliteration; however, it is 'auter' and 'aune' that echo with each other most prominently through their common initial vowel. This minor adjective thus has here a double function: to introduce the non-alliterating 'body' to the

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[21] For the *Gawain*-poet's treatment of adjective + noun combinations, see pp. 76-91 and pp. 219-26 above.
[22] See p. 260 above.

alliterative line, and to highlight the other non-alliterating 'auter' in the preceding line by repeating its initial syllable. Moreover, the adjective—which appears to be entirely metrically-motivated—has, in fact, more semantic weight than normal, being used with reference to God ('his *own* body'). Thus, the poet's unusual recourse to the minor adjective can be justified as an ingenious means to satisfy metrical demands *and* to reinforce his argument. Also, translinear alliteration here couples 'auter' with 'hondel', another important key word associated with the recurring image of 'touching', which becomes even more conspicuous in Part III in which the sacrilegious, or unclean, 'touching' of God's vessels determines and differentiates the fates of Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar. By taking advantage of the metrically least restricted position of the last stave and the technique of supplementary alliteration, the poet thus gives equivalent emphasis to all the key concepts and images that are variously developed in the course of the poem. These metrical practices all testify to the poet's strong concern with metre, and equally importantly, to his treatment of alliteration in a framework larger than the individual line in order to signal the contextual significance of a word which does not join the line-internal alliteration.

Before we move on to *Sir Gawain*, one more point needs to be discussed regarding the various effects that the last stave serves to create in this homily. One of the most distinctive features of *Cleanness* is antithesis.[23] Antithesis can be seen in theme, structure, image, and even in alliterative collocation. It is *clannesse* and *filþe*, two major themes of the whole poem, which present the most obvious and powerful antithesis. Antithesis can be observed in the presentation of the argument: juxtaposition of positive and negative terms in a line which are antithetical in sense, as in:

Þaȝ þe feloun were so **fers**	for his **fayre** wedeȝ	(217)
So fro **heuen** to **helle**	þat hatel schor laste	(227)
Þat amounted þe **mase**	his **mercy** watȝ passed	(395)
Þaȝ þat fowle be **false**	**fre** be þou euer	(474)

When one of the key terms does not alliterate, the poet exploits the last stave to create the same antithetical effect; for instance:[24]

As be **honest** vtwyth	and in with alle **fylþeȝ**	(14)

[23] For full discussion on the aspect of antithesis in this poem and the way it is handled, see Inoue, Chapter II.

[24] See also 21, 127, 148, 177, 237, 396, 544, 556, 734, 864, 1113, 1422, 1642, 1721, 1801, 1806.

Þurȝ þe **faut** of a freke	þat fayled in **trawþe**	(236)
And þenne **enherite** þat home	þat aungeleȝ **forgart**	(240)
And þay be founden in þat folk	of her **fylþe clene**	(730)
Oo, my frendeȝ so **fre,**	your fare is to **strange**	(861)
For þat folke in her **fayth**	watȝ founden **vntrwe**	(1161)
To forfare þe **falce**	in þe faythe **trwe**	(1168)
And phares folȝes for þose **fawtes**	to frayst þe **trawþe**	(1736)

The technique of supplementary alliteration and the exploitation of the last stave appear to suggest the relative uniqueness and individuality of the *Gawain* poet among other alliterative poets in the tradition, though the *Erkenwald* poet, as I shall claim later, also shows interesting use of the last stave, supplementary alliteration, and the A + N combination. In *Cleanness*, as in *Sir Gawain*, his artistic ambition is strongly reflected in the treatment of the b-verse and the last stave, which he exploits for various poetic—narrative, metrical, and antithetical—effects. Considering these points, the relatively rigid observance of the standard *aa/ax* alliterative pattern observed in *Cleanness* comes to seem even more unsound evidence to argue that the poet is not, in this work, imaginative enough to avail himself of the potential for artistic refinement of the last stave. On the contrary, his confident handling of alliteration, the last stave, and the b-verse in this poem strongly supports my argument that the alliterative aspect of metre, as opposed to ictus rules, is open to variation for stylistic purposes among alliterative poets in the tradition.

Cleanness presents much less variety in alliterative patterning than does *Sir Gawain.* In spite of this apparent difference, however, close examination of the poet's metrical practices in this homily demonstrates stylistic features with regard to alliteration and the last stave also to be discerned in *Sir Gawain.* Now let us turn to *Sir Gawain* and examine when and where the other metrical/stylistic features initially listed occur, and how the poet handles these, often in combination with those discussed above, to enhance his narrative.

6.3 Operative information in b-verses

This is the passage in which the Green Knight makes his first appearance at Arthur's court:

An oþer noyse ful newe ne3ed biliue,
Þat þe lude my3t haf leue liflode to cach;
For vneþe watz þe noyce not a whyle sesed,
And þe fyrst cource in þe court kyndely serued,
Þer hales in at þe halle dor an aghlich ***mayster***,
On þe **most** on þe **molde** on **mesure** hyghe. (*SG* 132-7)

The provenance of that 'oþer noyse,' first mentioned in line 132, is not revealed until line 136; there, syntactic inversion has the effect of placing the climactic revelation in the b-verse, whereas it is normally the a-verse which conveys the operative information. By reversing the normal syntactic and semantic roles assigned to the two half-lines, the poet heightens the narrative effect. The very first reference to the Green Knight in this poem thus comes with the adjective-noun phrase 'an aghlich mayster', a pair of words with Germanic and French origins respectively. The word 'aghlich', related to Anglo-Saxon *āglæca*, which is used in *Beowulf* for the monsters (739, 1259, 2520, 2557, 2592),[25] invites the listener to envisage an appalling, fearful creature of suprahuman size, whereas 'mayster', whose original meaning is 'teacher', had, in Middle English, a sense close to the Latin word *dominus*, 'anyone with authority' (i.e. it indicates status and dignity). The term, appearing nowhere else in the poem, is appropriate here, considering the stranger's dominating presence and his 'instructive' role in the poem. The combination of the seemingly contradictory words can also convey the bewilderment and incomprehensibility felt at the first sight of the Green Knight; he is not entirely rude, but nor is he entirely civil. In the following elaborate descriptions of the Green Knight and his interactions with Arthur, the ambivalence of his two aspects, awesomeness and stateliness, is continuously highlighted. Carrying such a great deal of semantic relevance in the context, therefore, 'mayster' would ideally receive alliterative prominence. But occurring at the last stave, the key term is devoid of alliterative emphasis. Again, the poet avails himself of supplementary alliteration to give it compensatory emphasis. Here again, the translinear alliteration creates a phonetic and resulting semantic link between 'mayster', and 'most', 'molde' and 'mesure' in the next line. The associative link between 'an aghlich mayster' and 'most' ('the largest') serves to complete the picture of a huge, fearful-looking man with an imposing dignity. Thus, the huge impact of the dramatic appearance of the Green

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[25] *Beowulf*, eds. Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson (Oxford, 1998).

Knight is highlighted by the alliterative linkage of the lines. In this way, the combined use of three devices—syntactic inversion, the operative information coming in the b-verse, and supplementary alliteration—dramatically enhances the narrative effect at this crucial point in the story.

As we have just seen, the poet occasionally creates, by translinear alliteration, an alliterative link across the syntactic and metrical boundaries of adjacent lines. As a result, the alliterative link between the two lines denies complete finality to the line-boundary. Instead, the last stave acquires forward metrical momentum into the next line. Occasionally, the poet even reverses the established semantic and syntactic roles of the half-lines to heighten narrative effect. The inversion of syntax that puts the new information in the b-verse is particularly noticeable in the above example—where the subject (i.e. the adjective-noun phrase) comes at the line-end. In the next passage—from the exposition of the 'pentangle' painted on Gawain's shield— the significant information is conveyed, again, by an adjective-noun phrase occupying the whole b-verse (630):

Hit is a syngne þat Salamon set sumquyle
In bytoknyng of trawþe, bi tytle þat hit habbez,
For hit is a figure þat haldez fyue poyntez,
And vche lyne vmbelappez and loukez in oþer,
And ayquere hit is endelez; and Englych hit callen
Oueral, as I here, þe endeles ***knot***.
Forþy hit **acordez** to þis **kny3t** and to his **cler** armez,
For ay faythful in fyue and sere fyue syþez
Gawan watz for gode knawen, and as golde pured,
Voyded of vche vylany, wyth vertuez ennourned
in mote. (*SG* 625-35)

The key phrase 'þe endeles knot' is here given special emphasis by means of syntactic delay, which is equivalent in its effect to inversion. The previous line (629) has an unusually heavy syntactic break at the caesura, and the b-verse requires completion by a complement, which is not supplied until the b-verse in the next line. Line 629b is thus connected syntactically to the next line through enjambment, which, though common in Anglo-Saxon alliterative verse, rarely occurs in this poem or in other Middle English alliterative poems. G. N. Leech points out that enjambment can be likened to

syncopation in music:[26] the practice of beginning a note on a normally unaccented part of the bar and sustaining it into the accented part in the following bar. Enjambment is, in this sense, an act of reversing an expected intonation-pattern, which creates the effect of anticipating syntactic completion, usually in the middle of the next line. In the quoted passage, however, the syntactic finality does not occur at the end of the following a-verse. Devoid of any significant meaning, that a-verse functions—in a way generally more typical of b-verses[27]—almost as a metrical filler for the purpose of postponing the occurrence of the most important key words until the line-end. By placing the operative information at the last stave, the poet reverses the established pattern of information delivery in the two half-lines to give climactic emphasis to the key word 'knot' and to the adjective-noun phrase ('þe endeles knot') which ends the b-verse, just as 'an aghlich mayster' does. As is the case with 'mayster', the contextual significance of 'knot' is also signalled by its translinear alliteration with the next line. The phonetic link between the two lines resulting from the cross-line alliteration triggers an associative link between 'knot', 'acordez', 'knyȝt', and 'cler', which, here, serves to emphasise that the pentangle indeed 'befits' Gawain, whose knightly virtues are knot-like. By combining metrical and stylistic devices, the poet can create the inseparable link between the 'bytoknyng of trawþe' ('the symbol of truth') and the knight possessed of 'grete trauþe' (2470).

The practice of placing new and significant information in the b-verse (instead of the a-verse) can be compared with that of the poet's deliberately keeping back the most revealing information for the bob and wheel, the five short rhymed lines which conclude a preceding stanza-like paragraph of unrhymed alliterative long lines. The bob and wheel might be predicted to make little contribution to the total significance conveyed by the preceding long lines, but this is not always the case, as is illustrated by the following bob and wheel, which discloses the most astonishing fact about the Green Knight: the colour of his body:

> And alle his fetures folȝande, in forme þat he hade,
> ful clene;
> For wonder of his hwe men hade,
> Set in his semblaunt sene;
> He ferde as freke were fade,

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[26] G. N. Leech, *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry* (London and New York, 1969), 123.
[27] For the poet's handling of redundant elements, see 6.5 below.

And oueral enker-grene. (*SG* 145-50)

The most startling information that the Green Knight is green ('oueral enker-grene') is held back in the preceding long lines, and is only here—at the very last line of the bob and wheel—revealed to the audience or reader. Another fine example of the bob and wheel is observed in the third fit, when the Lady at the Castle, on the third of her visits to Gawain in his bedroom, asks him to receive her 'riche rynk' after he apologises for being unable to give her any gift of his own:

> 'Þat mislykez me, ladé, for luf at þis tyme,
> Iche tolke mon do as he is tan, tas to no ille
> no pine.'
> 'Nay, hende of hyȝe honours,'
> Quoþ þat lufsum vnder lyne,
> 'Þaȝ I hade noȝt of yourez,
> **Ȝet schulde ȝe haue of myne.**' (*SG* 1810-6)

Here, it is in the metrical 'coda' of the bob and wheel that her artful offer is conveyed, and this fact serves to make her well-calculated statement seem less alarming to the audience or reader, who takes it as not indicating a significant new initiative. Her offer eventually leads to Gawain's acceptance of her girdle, the action which determines the outcome of his final meeting with the Green Knight, from whom he is to receive a return blow. The last line of the bob and wheel marks the shift in the Lady's tactics and thereby anticipates a new topic in the following paragraph of long lines, just as, in the previous example, the whole long-line paragraph following the bob and wheel is devoted to the description of the Green Knight's garments, which are all *green*. Therefore, the metrical 'coda' here and above foreshadows the following 'new movement'.

In this way, one can see a similarity, or rather, a parallel between the b-verse and the bob and wheel: both are syllabically shorter and by convention would be semantically lighter than the preceding units (i.e. the a-verse and the alliterative long lines); but the poet uses them to enhance narrative effect, by occasionally reversing the established pattern of information delivery, and making them convey new and significant information. Thus the relationship between the a-verse and the b-verse in the alliterative long line is, on a larger scale, repeated in that of a stanza-like paragraph of long lines and the five short lines of a bob and wheel. It is a well-known fact that the

Gawain poet shows a strong concern with parallelism and antithesis, which are observed at different levels such as narrative structure, theme, and syntax;[28] to this list, we can now add metre.

6.4 Alliteration in direct speech

In this section, we will look at a whole verse paragraph which involves direct speech, and consider how alliterative devices such as supplementary alliteration and loose alliteration can function in conversation, and explore the ways in which alliteration might serve to express the tone of the speaking voice. The following passage is taken from the second temptation scene in the third fit:[29]

Ho commes to þe cortyn, and at þe kny3t totes.
Sir Wawen her welcumed worþy on fyrst,
And ho hym 3eldez a3ayn ful 3erne of hir wordez,
Settez hir softly by his syde, and swyþely ho ***la3ez***,
And wyth a **luflych loke** ho **layde** hym þyse ***wordez***:

'Sir, 3if 3e be **Wawen**, **wonder** me þynkkez,
Wy3e þat is so wel wrast alway to ***god***,
And **connez** not of **compaynye** þe **costez** vndertake,
And if mon **kennes** yow hom to **knowe**, 3e **kest** hom of your mynde;
Þou hatz for3eten 3ederly þat 3isterday I ***ta3tte***
Bi **alder-truest token** of **talk** þat I cowþe.'

'What is þat?' quoþ þe wyghe, 'Iwysse I wot neuer;
If hit be sothe þat 3e breue, þe blame is myn awen.'
'3et I **kende** yow of **kyssyng**,' quoþ þe **clere** þenne,

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[28] See, for instance, D. R. Howard, 'Structure and Symmetry in *Sir Gawain*', in *Critical Studies of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, eds. D. R. Howard and C. Zacher (Nortre Dame, Indiana, 1968), 150-173; H. L. Savage, 'The Significance of the Hunting Scenes in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*', *JEGP* XXVII (1928), 1-15 (reprinted as Chapter II in the same author's *Gawain-Poet: Studies in his Personality and Background* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1956)). For parallelism and antithesis in syntax, see L. D. Benson, *Art and Tradition in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1965), 148-51.

[29] To highlight the units of direct speech, I have inserted line-spaces between each character's words.

'Quere-so **countenaunce** is **couþe** **quikly** to **clayme**; 1490
Þat bicumes vche a **knyȝt** þat **cortaysy** vses.'

'Do way,' quoþ þat derf mon, 'my dere, þat speche,
For þat durst I not do, lest I deuayed were;
If I were werned, I were wrang, iwysse, ȝif I profered.'

'Ma fay,' quoþ þe meré wyf, 'ȝe may not be werned, 1495
Ȝe ar stif innoghe to constrayne wyth strenkþe, ȝif yow lykez,
Ȝif any were so vilanous þat yow devaye wolde.'

'Ȝe, be God,' quoþ Gawayn, 'good is your speche,
Bot þrete is vnþryuande in þede þer I lende,
And vche gift þat is geuen not with goud wylle. 1500
I am at your **comaundement**, to **kysse** quen yow ***lykez***,
Ȝe may **lach** quen yow **lyst**, and **leue** quen yow þynkkez,
in space.' (*SG* 1476-1503)

Here and in other passages involving direct speech, alliteration seems less conspicuous: the poet occasionally allows himself to depart from the standard *aa/ax* pattern and write lines with only two alliterative stresses (e.g. 1481, 1488, 1501). One may argue, therefore, that such metrically 'light' lines appropriately suggest the less formal register of conversation. But this is only an illusion. Upon closer scrutiny, alliteration here is in fact proved to be hardly lighter than elsewhere, but it more frequently involves cross-line instead of line-internal alliteration. Let us now take a few examples from the passage to see how alliteration is exploited in direct speech. Translinear alliteration occurs between 'laȝez' in line 1479 and the following line. 'Laughing' is particularly associated with the Lady. All three bedroom, or 'temptation', scenes begin with the Lady's smiling ('laȝande', 1212, 1757; 'laȝez', 1479) and her jests ('bourdez', 1212), which are always answered by Gawain's merry laugh ('blyþe laȝter', 1217) and jests ('bourded', 1217). The scenes are thus filled with laughter and merriment, though the speakers themselves are, in fact, not merry at all; the laughs are a tactical veil to cover up conflict and preserve friendly and courteous appearances. The Lady's 'laugh' is indeed a verbal tactic for her to ensnare the courteous knight, thus serving to mark the shift from the outside world, where the actual hunting—violent and vigorous—is taking place, to the bedroom, the peaceful and civilized world inside the

castle, the battlefield for jolly—but equally perilous—verbal fights between the 'gay lady' (1208) and 'Gawayn þe blyþe' (1213). In this way, supplementary alliteration serves to provide the key term with an extra emphasis appropriate in the context.

The very first utterance of the Lady startles Gawain: his own identity is thrown into question. The Lady thus starts a verbal battle by questioning his 'god'-ness, the virtue that identifies and distinguishes him from other knights. The only two alliterating words at 1481, 'Wawen' and 'wonder', gain more prominence than they would in normal lines with three alliterating words, and the alliterative collocation expresses exactly her whole point. Her strategy of appealing to his reputed 'goodness' is reflected in the careful distribution of alliterative patterns: /w/, starting from the last stave of line 1480, continues throughout the next two lines, whereby the lack of one alliterative a-verse stave in 1481 appears to be metrically compensated for;[30] 'god' at the last stave is linked to the following line through loose alliteration between /g/ and /k/; the /k/ sound is repeated over two lines until the major syntactic pause at the end of line 1484; the remaining two lines are also linked by translinear alliteration. Furthermore, the alliterative collocations in lines 1489-91 are exploited to create an associative link between such words as 'kyssyng', 'quikly', 'clayme', 'cortaysy', and 'kny3t'. 'Claiming' a 'kiss' has nothing to do with the 'courtesy' of a knight, but the Lady's assertion that it has is reinforced by alliterative linkage of the concepts. The perverted logic of the Lady is thus transformed into an *aurally*—if not actually—convincing, logical 'argument'. Alliteration is thus proved to be an effective instrument to represent the exact tactics of the speaking voice.

However, the first stage of the verbal battle is won by Gawain. His victory becomes decisive when he finally comes to say, 'I am at your comaundement, to kysse quen yow lykez, / 3e may lach quen yow lyst, and leue quen yow þynkkez' (1501-2). Here 'comaundement', the only open-class word in the a-verse, echoes the readiness to 'kysse' through alliterative collocation, and 'lykez' and 'lyst' echo each other through translinear alliteration; Gawain completely *surrenders* himself to the Lady's will, but he does so only to 'dis-commit' himself to the act of kissing. Moreover, his seemingly polite invitation to take or leave him and his kisses ('3e may...leue quen yow þynkkez, in space') is conveyed, not by an if-clause, but by a *when*-clause. This is the first time in the whole stanza that Gawain uses a when-clause; in fact, the whole stanza is dominated by if-clauses, to a degree not entirely referable to the fact that courteous interactions essentially necessitate some usage of the subjunctive mood. *If* leaves the

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[30] See 1.1.1 above.

addressed more space in deciding the course of his/her future action (e.g. 'you can come if you like'),[31] while *when* gives an utterance a much stronger sense of finality ('you can come when you need'),[32] which can bring their interactions to closure, while retaining courteous and polite appearances. The alliterative collocation 'lykez', 'lach', 'lyst', and 'leue' emphasises courtesy, but the 'quen yow' structure closes down rather than leaves open. The poet superbly demonstrates that alliteration can become an excellent vehicle for capturing the speaking voice and expressing the subtleties and nuances of such verbal interactions.

6.5 Redundancies

Redundancy is a well-known stylistic feature of Middle (as well as Old) English alliterative verse. Redundant features are sometimes considered in the context of oral poetry (minstrelsy) in which such redundant elements serve to help the memory of the reciter and slow down and facilitate information delivery for the listener. They might have had such a function in the Anglo-Saxon period, in which poems were orally improvised and probably performed to music. However, Middle English alliterative poems are certainly not the works of poetic improvisation, though they might well have been delivered orally and so the redundancy would have been helpful to the audience. It might be that changes in the function of redundancy, in line with changes in the language itself, were so far-reaching between the Old English period and the fourteenth century that redundant elements had lost their original function by the late Middle English period. Redundancy may take the form of stock, or pleonastic, prepositional phrases such as *(vp)on molde*, *(vp)on folde*, and *(vp)on bent*, which literally mean 'on earth' or 'on the ground', are used at times without meaning; and there are also what the critic David Lawton calls 'source tags' and 'truth-tags' such as *as the book says* and *for sothe* ('truly').[33] These 'tags', frequently encountered in alliterative poetry, tend to

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[31] *If* used in the conditional clauses like the one here can be categorised as an *open condition*. Quirk et. al. state that open conditions are 'neutral' and 'leave unresolved the question of the fulfilment or nonfulfilment of the condition, and hence also the truth of the proposition expressed by the matrix clause', and cites as an example 'If Colin is in London, he is undoubtedly staying at the Hilton'; see Chapter 15 (especially, 15.29, 15.32) in Quirk et. al., *CGEL*.

[32] The strong sense of finality may be due to the fact that *when*-clause primarily expresses time, which is here combined with condition. Quirk et. al. call it the 'overlap of semantic roles' when clauses of time (e.g. when-clauses) imply, as here, relationships of condition (see 15.32 in *CGEL*).

[33] Lawton, '*The Destruction of Troy* as Translation from Latin Prose: Aspects of Form and Style', 264.

occur at verse-ending (i.e. line-ending and pre-caesura), or occupy the whole b-verse; for example, in the line 964 ('A mensk lady on molde mon may hir calle'), 'on molde' ('on earth') functions mainly to provide the second alliterating stress and contributes little to the total significance of the line.

In alliterative verse, the b-verse inevitably presents some redundancy, as different syntactic and semantic roles are typically fulfilled by the half-lines: the a-verse characteristically giving 'new' information by opening a statement, the b-verse repeating, expanding, or wrapping up what has been said in the a-verse. The b-verses in the lines taken from *The Destruction of Troy* (which I have already quoted on p. 256 above) illustrate this well. The large element of redundancy in the b-verse is due partly to the following factors: (1) the b-verse is generally syllabically shorter than the a-verse; and (2) one of the two stresses (normally the first) must alliterate. These two metrical constraints—the relative shortness of syllabic length and the alliterative requirement—of the b-verse can be compared with those operating on the tail-rhyme line (in rhyming verse), where similar metrical restrictions—the requirement of rhyme and the syllabically shorter length of the 3-stressed 'tail' line—make the heavy reliance on redundant elements inevitable. Chaucer, in his *Tale of Sir Thopas*, at one point extends the tail-verse stanza to include an even shorter (one-stressed) line—a bob—and in the process demonstrates how the shortest unit in any metrical structure tends to be filled with redundant elements such as tags and words with little meaning:

> His steede was al dappull gray,
> It gooth an ambil in the way
> Ful softely and rounde
> **In londe**. (B.Th 2074-7)

Here, the bob is occupied by 'in londe', which is used without meaning, as a mere metrical tag, to meet the demands of rhyme (with 'fonde' at 2080). This is an extreme example of 'bad' tail-rhyme, as the tale can best be taken as a burlesque of Middle English romance, especially, those written in tail-rhyme stanzas; but the b-verse in alliterative poetry (as the shorter unit of the line following on from the longer one) shows more or less the same tendency. In *Sir Thopas*, the tale-rhyme line and the bob are not the only position where redundant elements are observable; in fact, they are not uncommon in the eight-syllabled (or four-stressed) lines, as in the following example:

> And so bifel upon a day,

For sothe, as I yow telle may,
Sire Thopas wolde out ride. (B. Th 1938-40)

The middle line is entirely occupied by meaningless tags ('for sothe', 'as I yow telle may'), whose only rationale is to introduce, at the end of the line, the auxiliary 'may' which can rhyme with 'day' in the previous line. Three lines are thus devoted to a single unremarkable action: 'One day Sir Thopas wished to ride out'.

Redundancy may also take the form of repetition known as 'variation': a stylistic device often encountered in Anglo-Saxon verse, where two or more half-lines may convey virtually the same idea in different words or phrases. A typical example can be found in this passage from *Sir Gawain*:

Þis kyng lay at Camylot vpon Krystmasse
With **mony luflych lorde, ledez of þe best,**
Rekenly of þe Rounde Table **alle þo rich breþer,**
With rych reuel oryȝt and rechles merþes. (*SG* 37-40)

'Ledez of þe best' and 'alle þo rich breþer' in the b-verses of lines 38 and 39 are restatements of 'mony luflych lorde' in the a-verse of line 38. Variation is a stylistic feature observable more or less in every poem of the alliterative tradition. In the lines concerned, the technique of variation, combined with the use of 'luflych' and 'rich', words of lax application registering general approval, helps to create a general atmosphere of richness and abundance in Arthur's court. However, the variation in these lines appears to have little other aesthetic purpose.

With regard to variation, however, Burrow suggests its potential for artistic expression, arguing, in his discussion of *St Erkenwald*, that the technique of variation, whose origin is in Anglo-Saxon poetry, functions in the poem to emphasise certain significant elements of the narrative.[34] He appears to suggest, however, that the device of variation is given no such 'strong emphasising function' in *Sir Gawain*.[35]

I believe, however, that the *Gawain* poet does use the technique of variation for a similar emphasising purpose. Moreover, to create a highly tense and dramatic effect at significant points in his narrative, he combines the technique with his unconventional

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[34] For my present discussion, I have taken many hints from J. A. Burrow, 'Redundancy in Alliterative Verse: *St Erkenwald*', in *Individuality and Achievement in Middle English Poetry*, ed. O. S. Pickering (Cambridge, 1997), 119-128.

[35] Burrow, 'Redundancy', 128: 'It might be an interesting exercise to consider whether the same is true, as I believe it is not, in the richer and more ample texture of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'.

treatment of some other aspects of alliterative verse: alliteration, the b-verse, and the last stave. For the poet's handling of alliteration is characterised and distinguished from that of most other alliterative poets by his occasional diversion from the standard *aa/ax* alliterative pattern, and his use of alliteration as a marker of the semantic weight and contextual significance of a word. His treatment of the b-verse and the last stave (normally the least significant elements of the line) also shows his artistic imaginativeness.

The exploitation of variation for special effect is illustrated by the following lines, which describe Gawain's preparations for his departure from the castle to the Green Chapel. Gawain puts on, besides his armour, the supposedly life-saving girdle, which he has received from the Lady of the castle:

> Ȝet laft he not **þe lace, þe ladiez gifte,**
> Þat **forgat** not **Gawayn** for **gode** of hymseluen.
> Bi he hade belted þe bronde vpon his balȝe haunchez,
> Þenn dressed he his drurye double hym aboute,
> Swyþe sweþled vmbe his swange swetely þat knyȝt
> Þe gordel of þe grene silke, þat gay wel bisemed,[36]
> Vpon þat ryol red cloþe þat ryche watz to schewe. (*SG* 2030-6)

The a-verse of line 2030 is restated and amplified in the following three half-lines. First, the noun phrase 'þe lace' in 2030a is restated in the following b-verse as 'þe ladiez gifte'. The term 'gifte', occurring in the last stave, does not alliterate within the line. However, it is given compensatory alliterative emphasis by translinear alliteration with the following line. This supplementary alliteration thus serves to draw attention to the contextual significance of the key word 'gifte'. Furthermore, the alliterative link between 'gifte', 'forgat', 'Gawayn', and 'gode' serves to create, through a phonetic link, a new relation between these words which syntactically and metrically belong to different domains. Here, the translinear alliterative collocations function to restate, in clearer terms, the action, the agent, and his motivation for that action. The restatement of the subject (i.e. the pronoun 'he' in 2030a restated in the proper noun 'Gawayn' in the next line), for instance, has a strong emphasising effect. The shades of meaning between 'laft' and 'forgat' are also worth noticing: the sense conveyed by

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[36] N. Davis takes 'þat gay wel bisemed' as a relative clause ('which well suited that handsome man') with a subject relative omitted; see note to this line on p. 102 in his edition.

the verb phrase 'laft not' concentrates attention more or less on the action itself, while that of 'forgat not' focuses less on the action itself than the state of mind, thus suggesting that it is *not* the fact of the *gift* and thus the Lady's decision (or obedience to it on Gawain's part) but the wish of *Gawain himself*, that he should wear the life-saving girdle, thinking her girdle to be something worth *not forgetting* for his *own* 'gode'.

Line 2035 is also worth commenting on. In the 'pentangle' passage I have quoted on p. 272 above, it was the pentangle that 'acordez to' ('befits') Gawain because the hero, we were told, shows the knot-like perfection in his virtues; but here, it is the 'gordel of þe grene silke' that 'biseme[z]' him. No mention is made of the pentangle, as if it had been replaced by the Lady's gift. Quite interestingly, the key word 'bisemed', which occurs outside the line-internal alliteration, echoes with 'silke' in the a-verse, and the alliterative linkage inevitably creates an ironic tone—by implying that the beautiful and splendid material of 'silke' suited him well, not now because his external indicates his internal beauty, but merely because he was a 'gay' ('fair') knight. In this way, the variation and alliteration work together to create even stronger emphasis on the significant elements in the narrative.

Another fine example of the exploitation of variation is also found in the following passage in which Gawain, after parting with the guide, finally comes to the point where he was told he would find the Green Chapel:

> And ofte chaunged his cher þe chapel to seche:
> He seȝ non suche in no syde, and selly hym þoȝt,
> Saue, a lyttel on a launde, **a lawe as hit were;**
> A balȝ **berȝ** bi a bonke þe brymme bysyde,
> Bi a forȝ of a flode þat ferked þare;
> Þe borne blubred þerinne as hit boyled hade.
> Þe knyȝt kachez his caple, and com to þe **lawe,**
> Liȝtez doun luflyly, and at a lynde tachez
> Þe rayne and his riche with a roȝe braunche.
> Þenne he boȝez to þe **berȝe,** aboute hit he walkez,
> Debatande with hymself quat hit be myȝt.
> Hit hade a hole on þe ende and on ayþer syde,
> And ouergrowen with gresse in glodes aywhere,
> And al watz holȝ inwith, nobot an **olde caue,**
> Or a **creuisse** of an **olde cragge,** he couþe hit noȝt deme
> with spelle. (*SG* 2169-84)

From the moment the Green Knight first appeared at Arthur's court, Gawain (and the audience) have been constantly reminded of the pledge he made to the Green Knight, which requires him to seek out the place called the Green Chapel and receive a return blow. As the Green Chapel has been always referred to either as 'the Green Chapel' or a 'chapel', Gawain (and the audience) have naturally come to expect that the climax of the story will take place at a chapel of some kind. In fact, as the story approaches its climax, the poet appears to be reconfirming this point, with a double reference to the 'chapel', first at 2147 (where the guide says 'And þou schal se in þat slade þe self chapel') and again at 2169 ('And ofte chaunged his cher þe chapel to seche'). However, what Gawain sees ahead is nothing but a 'lawe' ('mound'). The position of this word after the preposition ('saue') is postponed until the b-verse so that climactic emphasis is given to the mound-like object that the hero (and the audience)—with puzzlement and disappointment—recognises: for the Green Chapel is not, after all, a real chapel at all. Not only is it not a real chapel, it is not at all remarkable, and thus not the sort of place where Gawain had been expecting to face his—apparently—remarkable and suprahuman adversary who, at Arthur's court, had miraculously survived his well-aimed blow. The word 'lawe' is repeated and defined more precisely in the following a-verse as a 'balȝ berȝ' ('barrow with round smooth surface') (2172a). 'Lawe' (2171b, 2175b) and 'berȝ(e)' (2172a, 2178a) are used in reference to the 'chapel' until Gawain has a full view of the place and realises that it is 'nobot an olde caue' (2182b).

The revelation is gradual, but nonetheless startling. The poet takes trouble to underline the 'time-wornness' of the cave by repeating the adjective 'olde' twice, first in 'olde caue' and second in 'olde cragge'. There is a particular aptness in the selection of the word 'olde' rather than its synonym 'auncian', which the poet (could but) does not use: the term 'auncian', restricted in reference in this poem to Morgan alone (e.g. 948, 1001, 2463), connotes a sense of awe and respect on the part of the viewer towards the viewed, whereas the term 'olde' does not.[37] The emphasis created by translinear alliteration, which produces a phonetic link across the line boundary between 'caue', 'creuisse', and 'cragge', focuses attention onto these words and their semantic correlation. This supplementary alliteration also serves to bestow compensatory alliterative prominence on the key word 'caue', which does not alliterate line-internally,

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[37] Burrow also discusses the poet's colloquial use of *old* in the poem, and suggests the possibility of 'olde' at lines 2182 and 2183 carrying a depreciating colloquial sense (as recorded in *OED* sense 3); see J. A. Burrow, *A Reading of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (London, 1965), 69-70, 122-3.

and which, again, shows the operative information—again, in the form of adjective-noun phrase—coming in the b-verse. Variation, repetition, and translinear alliteration work in conjunction to convey the deflation of Gawain's expectation, his embarrassment, and the sense of anti-climax at the sight of the desolate place which has no resemblance to a chapel.

The climax of this poem is the final meeting of Gawain and the Green Knight at the Green Chapel. This section involves two revelations, in which the poet's sensitive handling of b-verse and redundant elements manifests itself. The next lines are from the First Revelation, in which the Green Knight tells Gawain that he was in fact the lord of the castle, and that he not only knew about all the visits of his wife to Gawain but himself planned them to test Gawain's *trawþe* ('truth') or *lewté* ('loyalty')—both very much key terms in the poem:

'For hit is **my wede** þat þou werez, **þat ilke wouen girdel,**
Myn owen wyf hit þe weued, **I wot wel for soþe**.
Now know I wel þy cosses, and þy costes als,
And þe wowyng of my wyf: **I wroȝt hit myseluen**.
I sende hir to asay þe, and sothly me þynkkez
On þe fautlest freke þat euer on fote ȝede;
As perle bi þe quite pese is of prys more,
So is Gawayn, in god fayth, bi oþer gay knyȝtez.
Bot here yow lakked a lyttel, sir, **and lewté yow wonted;**
Bot þat watz for no wylyde werke, ne wowyng nauþer,
Bot for ȝe lufed your lyf; **þe lasse I yow blame.'**
Þat oþer stif mon in study stod a gret whyle,
So agreued **for greme** he gryed withinne;
Alle þe blode of his brest blende in his face,
Þat al he schrank **for schome** þat þe schalk talked.
Þe forme worde vpon folde þat þe freke meled. (*SG* 2358-73)

In this passage, particularly important statements tend to occur in the b-verse, such as: indications of the Green Knight's own involvement in the tricks (2359 'I wot wel for soþe', 2361 'I wroȝt hit myseluen'); the specification of Gawain's fault as an all-important lack of *lewté* ('loyalty') (2366 'and lewté yow wonted'); and the Green Knight's judgment on his partial failure (2368 'þe lasse I yow blame'). Furthermore, these b-verses all constitute independent clauses, and are preceded, especially at 2361

and 2368, by an unusually heavy syntactic break. Here again the poet is reversing the normal semantic and syntactic pattern of the two half-lines and placing the most significant information in the b-verse. This practice may be the poet's attempt to reflect the implications of the scene as a 'Revelation': the end does not necessarily confirm the beginning, or, as the poet himself puts it, 'þe forme to þe fynisment foldez ful selden' (499). The passage confirms that comment, in that the end of Gawain's adventure does not confirm the expectations that he had at the beginning, and the truth of what was going on is only here at the end revealed. The metre reflects this feature of 'end-revelation', in that the b-verse 'reveals', and does not fit into the expected semantic pattern of the two half-lines.

The first two lines illustrate another fine example of variation. The phrase 'my wede' is restated in the b-verse as 'þat ilke wouen girdel'; but 'my wede' is not completely obvious in its reference, since the term can be used of any item of apparel. However, the unclear reference of the term has the effect of anticipating, and thereby giving more emphasis to, the b-verse, which specifies it as the Lady's girdle. Although the b-verse of the second line (2359) contains two apparently redundant elements, the monosyllabic emphasiser 'wel' and the truth-tag 'for soþe', these serve to reiterate the Green Knight's complete knowledge of Gawain's dealings with the Lady. This point is re-emphasised in the following a-verse, with 'Now know I wel. . . .' The emphatic pronominal 'myseluen' in the b-verse of line 2361 is also pertinent, serving to reiterate the speaker's complete control over the tricks at the castle. Such minor elements and tags would normally be metrical necessities but semantic redundancies; but here they are also semantically an integral part of the total significance of the passage.

In line 2366, the a-verse ('Bot here yow lakked a lyttel, sir') has the effect of anticipating the b-verse, which unveils what it is that Gawain was actually lacking. The key word 'wonted' ('was lacking') does not alliterate line-internally, but its contextual significance is signalled by compensatory translinear alliteration.

The last five lines (2369-73) give a precise description of Gawain's reaction to the preceding speech by the Green Knight, and serve to convey the time and effort that Gawain needed before he became capable of any *verbal* reaction. Particularly striking is the detailed account of Gawain's *non-verbal* reaction before his first utterance. The first four lines (2369-72) form a two-line pair; the lines describing Gawain's inner state (2370, 2372) are in both cases preceded by those describing his physical condition (2369, 2371). Here, every word contributes to the concise but forceful expression. Phrases like *in/for greme* and, particularly, *for schome* are at times used almost without meaning, as a mere metrical convenience. Typical examples occur in *The Destruction*

of Troy: 'Mony grekes *in þere gremy* gird on the hed' (4754), and 'I will shunt *for no shame* of my shene fader' (600). However, because Gawain's 'greme' and 'schome' are supported and demonstrated by the changes in his outer appearance, these words come to carry real force, and convey his inner state with precision and vividness. The phrase 'stif mon' is more or less a stock phrase used of anyone with boldness and fearlessness. In this particular instance, however, the audience or reader cannot help seeing irony: for Gawain, though brave enough to turn up at the appointed place to receive the return blow from the Green Knight, has nevertheless failed to give over the life-saving girdle for fear of losing his own life.

The last line (2373) is also worth comment. A word of special interest is 'forme' ('first'). The meaning is normally expressed in ME by *fyrst*, and the poem presents nine instances of that word used as an adjective or a noun (e.g. 54, 116, 135, 224, 290, 1072, 1150, 1443, 2347[38]). The poet normally uses *fyrst*, frequently at a non-alliterating position, when it does not carry any special emphasis, as in 'And I schal bide þe fyrst bur as bare as I sitte' (290). There are just two instances of 'forme' throughout the poem (the other instance occurs in line 499, 'þe forme to þe fynisment foldez ful selden'); and there and here at 2373 the word is charged with full meaning, and alliteration appropriately signals its considerable semantic relevance in the context. Therefore, the selection of the term suggests that the poet treats alliteration as a way of bestowing emphasis on a word with contextual significance, when he has means and choice to do so. The stock phrase 'vpon folde' ('on earth') is often used as a mere metrical filler to satisfy alliterative and rhythmic demands, but here it has two non-metrical functions: it has a pictorial effect (Gawain is standing on the ground before the Green Knight); and it produces a rhetorical emphasis ('the first words on earth', 'the first words in the world'). His speech is announced, not with less emphatic words like *quod* or *said*, which are the most common way of introducing speech in Middle English alliterative poetry, but with the term 'meled', which derived from OE *mǣlan*. This OE verb was a poetic word—that is, it occurred only or mainly in poetical texts. The ME derivative 'meled' is normally used only as an alliterative alternative to *sayd(e*. It is here 'meled', and not *sayd(e*, that occurs at the non-alliterating last stave, although the latter, with a sounded final *–e*, also becomes a viable option for the line-terminal position, which ends, in *Sir Gawain*, nearly always with an unstressed syllable;[39] this,

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[38] The statistics exclude numerous other instances of *fyrst* occurring as an adverb or forming the stock prepositional phrase, *(vp)on fyrst*; see 9, 301, 359, 379, 491, 528, 568, 640, 1422, 1477, 1592, 1607, 1934, 1960, 2015, 2019, 2227, 2345, 2394, 2524.

[39] See, for instance, *SG* 1821b ('and redyly he sayde'), 1933b ('and goudly he sayde'), 2126b, 2299b,

in turn, suggests that the term is used for its own sake; that is, the poet draws on the poetic status of ME 'meled' to create a slightly archaic and formal tone, appropriate for a speech with great emotional tension.

The next lines are taken from the Second Revelation, in which the Green Knight tells Gawain that Morgan, the plotter of all the tricks, is in fact the old lady whom Gawain had met at the castle, and that she is Arthur's half-sister and also Gawain's aunt:

> 'Þat is **ho** þat is at home, **þe auncian lady;** 2463
> Ho is euen **þyn aunt, Arþurez half-suster** . . .
> Make myry in my hous; my meny þe louies, 2468
> And I wol þe as wel, wyȝe, bi my faythe,
> As any gome vnder God **for þy grete trauþe.'** (*SG* 2463-70)

Variation here relates the b-verse of the first line and the whole of the second line to the a-verse of the first line. Here, too, the poet's amplifications and alliterative collocations are controlled by a strong relation to the context. 'Ho þat is at home' is restated as 'þe auncian lady' in the following b-verse, and in the next line, her identity is made even clearer, first by the phrase 'þyn aunt' and second by 'Arþurez half-suster'. The elements in the first two lines are carefully arranged so that each variation is more revealing than the one preceding, the last one unveiling a fact which is most pertinent to Gawain: for his self-esteem, as Gawain himself has said, comes only from the fact that Arthur is his uncle ('Bot for as much as ȝe ar myn em I am only to prayse, / No bounté bot your blod I in my bodé knowe', 356-7). In this sense, the variation in this passage functions as a development, a transformation even, of the original element.

The last three lines are also worth comment. The b-verse of line 2469 ('wyȝe, bi my faythe') is filled with a truth-tag, and the following a-verse ('As any gome vnder God') is similarly an intensifier, which itself contains another tag, 'vnder God' ('on earth'). These two half-lines, however, serve to postpone the most significant statement in the Green Knight's speech to its very end. Moreover, they are not used as mere metrical fillers: they have a strong emphasising function, which is also appropriate in this context. Through the intensifier, tags, and the placement of operative information in the b-verse, the poet can give the utmost emphasis to the last words from the Green Knight, expressing his admiration for Gawain's 'grete trauþe'.

2337b, 2389b, etc. in which 'sayde' occurs at the line-final position, with a sounded final *-e*. For feminine line endings in the *Gawain*-poet's works, see Putter and Stokes, 'Spelling', 87-95.

6.6 Conclusion

A close examination of the metre of *Cleanness*, *Patience*, and *Sir Gawain* makes it clear that the alliterative metre is an excellent medium for the subtleties and complexities of the meaning of the poems. Alliteration here, as in any other poem written in the unrhymed alliterative long line, serves the structural function of linking the half-lines; but it also often responds to semantic demands, highlighting significant elements of sense in the narrative. Supplementary alliteration is not merely an elaborate alliterative device for ornamental purposes; it is the poet's deliberate attempt to call the audience/reader's attention to a non-alliterating but contextually significant word. Furthermore, the technique enables the poet to extend collocations, to create a metrical link between two consecutive lines, and to produce, among the different collocations, a new semantic relation beyond line and syntactic boundaries. The potential of the b-verse and the last stave is also exploited to the full by the poet, who employs them, in the homily, for his lexical associations with *clanness* and *fylþe*, and in the romance for creating dynamisms—tension and emphasis—in his narrative. Last but not least, the traditional metrical necessities but semantic redundancies of alliterative verse—b-verses, stock phrases and tags, and variation—can be transformed by the skilful poet into means by which he can achieve various effects. His skill lies in the flexibility and sophistication with which he handles stylistic and metrical devices, and combines them variously to achieve the appropriate narrative effect. For this reason, the poems of the *Gawain* poet can be said to be among the works which most clearly demonstrate the way in which metre is interwoven with context and meaning.

6.7 *St Erkenwald*

St Erkenwald also demonstrates the poet's confident treatment of the metre and his exploitation of it for narrative purposes. Consistent with the similarities between *St Erkenwald* and the works of the *Gawain* poet which once led to theories of common authorship is the fact of the closeness of the metre of *SE* to that of the Cotton Nero poems: both poets are not only skilful in their handling of metre, but also flexible in combining it with various other stylistic devices to enhance their narratives. The most interesting of the similarities between the two poets is their less mechanical treatment of the b-verse, redundant elements, and the (usually) non-alliterating last stave. I have

demonstrated that these features characterise the metre and style of the Cotton Nero poems, *Sir Gawain* in particular, and that their effects are closely interwoven with the context and meaning of that romance. The metrical and stylistic features shared between *Sir Gawain* and *St Erkenwald* may appear, at first glance, to serve as evidence for their common authorship. However, a close study of the metre and style of *St Erkenwald* provides strong counter-evidence. The difference manifests itself most conspicuously in the *SE* poet's treatment of adjectives, including those occurring in the form of the adjective + noun combination, and in his spare, but effective, use of redundant elements. These differences are an integral part of the poet's style, and correspond with the clarity and conciseness with which the poet deals with the question of the salvation of the pagan soul, one of the most controversial theological issues in his time. In this section, therefore, I shall study the metre and style of the legend and see how those features (both metrical and stylistic) mentioned above work in conjunction with the meaning of the poem.

What strikes one first about the poet's style is its economy and conciseness. This stylistic feature becomes even more obvious, for instance, by analysing the nature and distribution of adjectives used in this poem. In the first place, they occur much less frequently, compared with, for instance, those of *Sir Gawain*.[40] In addition, they are mostly conventional, like those frequently encountered in other alliterative poems: *fair*, *rich*, *bri3t*, *dere*, etc. However, the stock adjectives in *Erkenwald* carry real force. One reason for this is because, although adjectives are used sparingly in this poem, when they occur, they contribute to the total significance of the line in which they occur (i.e. they are not semantically redundant). For example, when the poet recounts the discovery of the mysterious tomb:

> And as þai makkyd and mynyd a mervale þai founden
> As 3et in crafty cronecles is kydde þe memorie,
> For as þai dy3t and dalfe so depe into þe erthe
> Þai founden fourmyt on a flore a ferly *faire* toumbe. (*SE* 43-6)

Here, 'faire' apparently expresses the physical beauty and splendour of the tomb. However, the adjective can also be seen, in retrospect at least, also to accord with the spotlessness and gracefulness of the way the corpse was preserved, and, more

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[40] What characterise the adjective + noun combinations in *Sir Gawain* most are their *exuberance* and *unpredictability*; for the full discussion of the adjective + noun combination in *Sir Gawain*, see pp. 76-91 and pp. 219-26 above.

importantly, the virtue and the personal integrity of the pagan judge. It is also worth noting that the adjective and the intensive adverb which precedes it are both given alliterative prominence. Whether or not the adjective bears metrical ictus here—I think it does not—the poet's intention seems to be to mark the semantic significance of the adjective through the insertion of the intensive adverb and the double alliteration on both the adverb and its qualifying adjective. The 'fairness'—both physical and moral—of the pagan judge becomes even clearer as he answers, one by one, the questions put by Erkenwald. The poet uses *faire* only twice in the poem, and the second instance occurs in reference to the corpse, just before Erkenwald utters the baptismal words:

> 'Oure Lord lene,' quod þat lede, 'þat þou lyfe hades,
> By Goddes leve, as longe as I myȝt lacche water,
> And cast upon þi *faire* cors and carpe þes wordes.' (*SE* 315-7)

I have argued in Chapters III and V that the adjective + noun combinations, particularly those occurring at the pre-caesural position, are most commonly used to insert a non-alliterating noun, and that alliteration in such combinations normally falls on the adjective, which is also usually accompanied by stress. At 317, however, the pre-caesural stress falls (with the application of the spacing rule) on the non-alliterating *adjective* 'faire', and the combination ('faire cors') thus shows disjunction between alliteration and stress. Here, the poet seems to be exploiting the combination to introduce the non-alliterating but contextually significant *adjective*, a practice comparable with that of the *Gawain* poet:

> So bisied him his *ȝong* blod and his brayn wylde (*SG* 89)
> And sayde, As I am *trwe* segge I siker my trawþe (*SG* 1673)

These two are only a few of the instances which demonstrate the imaginative handling of the *Gawain* poet. Since we know, by this stage, how righteous and virtuous the pagan judge was in his lifetime, it is now obvious that the 'fairness' here also implies his moral spotlessness. Thus, the two instances of *faire* in *SE* are more marked *because* the adjective is there evocative and *meaningful*—quite unusual in other alliterative poems, in which it is mostly *meaningless*, devoid of any real force, used merely as a medium to introduce a non-alliterating noun. Used in this highly effective way, the stock adjective cannot be regarded as redundant or meaningless, as it so often

is in such poems as *The Destruction of Troy*:

> And Jason, þat gentill aioynet was to name:
> A *faire* man of feturs, and fellist in armys. (*DT* 128-9)

Similarly,

> Thus Pelleus with payne was pricket in hert,
> ffull egurly with enuy, and euer hym bethought,
> With a course of vnkyndnes he caste in his thoughte,
> The freike vpon *faire* wese ferke out of lyue. (*DT* 142-5)

Indeed, it is difficult to find in this poem an instance in which *faire* is imbued with as much implication and significance as that in *St Erkenwald*.

Conventional prepositional phrases such as *on erthe* and *on molde* are used just as sparingly. Again, as was the case with the adjectives, semantic redundancy often observed in verses with these phrases—e.g. 'A mensk lady *on molde* mon may hir calle' (*SG* 964)—is hardly observable in this poem:

> Þat all þe hondes *under heven* halde myȝt never (*SE* 166)
> One þe unhapnest hathel þat ever *on erthe* ȝode (*SE* 198)
> Declynet never my consciens for covetise *on erthe* (*SE* 237)
> Then for al þe meritorie medes þat men *on molde* usen (*SE* 270)

One should always be careful in examining the stylistic effects that the stock prepositional phrases may have; for their primary function is to meet the alliterative and/or rhythmic demands, and the consequent semantic redundancy is a characteristic stylistic feature of alliterative poetry in general. The same is more or less true of the prepositional phrases in the above examples, their occurrence being prompted partly by rhythmic and/or alliterative requirements. However, the above stock phrases have other functions as well: for instance, 'under heven' at 166 above, which designates place (thus 'all the hands on earth'), not only serves to emphasise the preceding noun ('all the hands in the world'), but also suits the context in which man's inability and helplessness ('Bot quen matyd is monnes myȝt and his mynde passyd' 163) are contrasted with the omnipotence of God ('Þen lettes hit hym ful litell to luse wyt a finger/ Þat all þe hondes under heven halde myȝt never' 165-6).

Lines 321-31 describe how the conditions of baptism are fulfilled by a single tear

which fell on the face of the pagan judge:

> With þat worde þat he warpyd, þe wete of his eghen 321
> And teres trillyd adoun and on þe toumbe lighten,
> And one felle on his face, and þe freke syked.
> Þen sayd he with a sadde soun: 'Oure Savyoure be lovyd!
> Now herid be þou, hegh God, and þi hende Moder, 325
> And blissid be þat blisful houre þat ho the bere in!
> And also be þou, bysshop, þe bote of my sorowe
> And þe relefe of þe lodely lures þat my soule has levyd in!
> For þe wordes þat þou werpe and þe water þat þou sheddes,
> Þe bryȝt bourne of þin eghen, my bapteme is worthyn. 330
> Þe fyrst slent þat on me slode slekkyd al my tene.' (*SE* 321-31)

In these lines, one single event, the falling of a single tear on the face, is described with utmost precision and care. The poet exploits the technique of variation to describe the dramatic moment as if it were taking place in slow motion, and thereby to give the scene utmost emphasis. The poet's eye is first focused on the eyes of Erkenwald as the source of 'water', his 'tears' being periphrastically referred to as 'þe wete of his eghen' 321; in the following a-verse, the poet restates the 'wete' more specifically as 'teres,' then tells what they do ('tryllyd adoun'); 'lighten' in the following b-verse specifies the place on which the tears fell (i.e. 'þe toumbe'); in the a-verse of line 323, the poet's eye is focused on a *single* tear which fell on the 'face' of the pagan judge lying in the tomb; and finally, in the following b-verse ('and þe freke syked'), his eyes rest on the whole body of the judge ('þe freke') and recognises the judge's immediate reaction to the falling of the tear on the exposed flesh of his face ('syked').

The consistent use of the conjunctive 'and' from line 321 to 323 serves to convey the close sequence in which the events took place, and the shift from 'and' to 'þen' at the beginning of line 324 effectively marks the completion of the conditions for baptism.

The most dramatic and significant moment in this poem is conveyed by the b-verse of line 323, 'and þe freke syked'. As Burrow perceptively points out, this is the first and last time that the term 'freke' is used in reference to the pagan judge;[41] he has been referred to as 'a blisfull body' (76), 'lykhame' (179), 'faire cors' (317), etc. The key noun suggests, therefore, that the 'dead' pagan body is now joined in the living

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[41] Burrow, 'Redundancy', 125.

Christian community from which he had been excluded. The first physical reaction that the pagan judge makes is described by 'syked'; as the next line suggests, this is a sigh of relief and gratitude. 'Sikyed', occurring at the last stave, lacks alliterative prominence, but its contextual significance is signalled by its supplementary alliteration with the next line. There is thus a phonetic link created by the translinear alliteration between 'syked', and 'sayd', 'sadde soun', and 'Savyoure'.

Line 324 is also worth commenting on. As is the case with line 323, it is again in the b-verse that the significant words occur. The a-verse announces speech, but this function is elsewhere in the poem carried out by the b-verse, as the following examples show:

> Then he turnes to þe toumbe and talkes to þe corce,
> Lyftand up his egh-lyddes *he loused such wordes*. (*SE* 178-180)

> Þen hummyd he þat þer lay and his hedde waggyd,
> And gefe a gronyng ful grete *and to Godde sayde*. (*SE* 281-2)

There is an aptness in the poet's departure from his normal pattern. The pagan judge, who 'hummyd' and 'gefe a gronyng ful grete' when he spoke, is now able to say with 'sadde soun' ('grave utterance'). Here, the adjective 'sadde' is endowed with real force, as opposed to that in many other alliterative poems, in which the word virtually has no real meaning, functioning, instead, to provide the b-verse with an alliterating sound. Typical examples are found, again, in *The Destruction of Troy*:

> And all soburly said with a *sad* wille (*DT* 248)
> Chethes full soberly and with *sad* wordes (*DT* 380)

> Hir Ene as a trendull truned full rounde,
> ffirst on hir fader, for feare þat she hade,
> And sethyn on þat semely with a *sad* wille. (*DT* 453-5)

More importantly, however, by inverting the normal pattern, the *Erkenwald* poet places the utmost emphasis on the first verbal utterance of the pagan judge which follows his sigh, 'Oure Savyoure be lovyd!' (324). As Burrow also points out, the shift from '3our Criste' (209) to 'our Savyoure' clearly indicates that the baptism for the pagan judge is

now complete.[42] But Erkenwald as well as people surrounding the corpse (and the audience) are not told this fact immediately; rather, they (and we) have to wait, perhaps with slight puzzlement, to be told, by the pagan judge himself, what made this miracle possible. For this purpose the technique of variation is exploited. The judge first praises God and Mary, then Erkenwald; he first calls the bishop 'þe bote of my sorowe' and 'þe relefe of þe lodely lures þat my soule has levyd in', without specifying the reason for his doing so; in lines 329-30, he refers to the 'wordes', 'water', and 'bryȝt bourne', and only then, nearly at the end of his speech, explicitly reveals that these have been his baptism ('my bapteme is worthyn', 330). This significant statement is again conveyed in the b-verse, which normally gives recapitulating or no information. It may be that the technique of variation, which figures in the b-verse of line 329 and the following a-verse, is exploited by the poet to defer the most significant statement of the judge until the end of the line, a practice comparable, once again, with that of the *Gawain* poet, who also, as we have seen (see above pp. 287), holds back the most significant words from the Green Knight (in his last speech) expressing his admiration for Gawain's 'grete trauþe', until the very end of his speech, which also comes at the end of the line.

Close study of the poem demonstrates that the *Erkenwald* poet is indeed as skilful and confident in his handling of the metre as the *Gawain* poet; both show a similar uncommon versatility in their use of adjective + noun combinations, redundancies, the b-verse and last stave, and alliteration. They share the exploitation of the normally insignificant or recapitulating b-verse and last stave to create strong foregrounding and tension in the narrative, and of supplementary alliteration to mark the contextual importance of a word which does not join the line-internal alliteration. With regard to adjective + noun combinations and redundancies, however, the two poets—though equally ambitious in their exploitation of them for narrative purposes—show a marked difference: in the legend, simple, common adjectives are consistently used, but they are far from semantic redundancies, being imbued with implications and contextual importance, while in *Sir Gawain*, such traditional adjectives, together with unconventional and unpredictable ones, contribute to creating a more ample and exuberant texture; and the stock prepositional phrases are used, in the legend, far more sparingly than in the romance, though with equal effectiveness. These stylistic differences constitute strong evidence against the common authorship of the works of the *Gawain* poet and *St Erkenwald*.

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42 Burrow, 'Redundancy', 125-6.

Conclusion

In the first five chapters, I have investigated the metrical principles that underlie the structure of the unrhymed alliterative long line, especially, that of the a-verse. In the introduction, I have demonstrated that the three-stave-verse theory (as advocated by Duggan, in particular) entails inconsistencies and unnecessary complexities, which prevent anyone from forming a well-defined account of the crowded a-verse, and pointed out that such complexities and inconsistencies are due mainly to the universal application to all the alliterative poems of his *aa/ax* rule and the conflation of metrical with linguistic stress. Particularly emphasised was the need for the clear distinction between linguistic stress and metrical ictus: the latter does not *always* fall on words that bear the former. I have argued that the a-verse (whether standard or crowded) has only two stresses, and that there are mechanisms for reducing three or four possible ictus positions to two.

In Chapter I, I have suggested that the lines with non-*aa/ax* patterns (e.g. *ax/ax*, *ab/ba*, *aa/xa*, etc.) found in *Sir Gawain* are probably authentic, and that lines lacking one alliterative stress in the a-verse are often given what I call 'metrical compensation'—i.e. compensatory cross-line alliteration between a line with only one alliterative stress in the a-verse and an adjacent line—and that this compensatory technique may be serving to produce some conformity with lines with the standard *aa/ax* pattern.[1] We have also seen that alliteration between /k/ and /g/, and /s/ and /ʃ/ is not permitted in this poem.[2]

In Chapter II, I have proposed a rule for resolving the crowded a-verse into a regular two-stave verse, and argued that the length of the dip between the word bearing the pre-caesural stress and the open-class word which immediately precedes is a decisive factor in determining stress assignment in the crowded a-verse.[3] There are also rules governing the verse-ending positions (i.e. line-ending and pre-caesura): pronouns occurring at the line-final position never take stress, serving, consistently, to create an unstressed line-ending;[4] at pre-caesura, the verse-final word always takes stress, regardless of its word class (open or closed), unless this verse-final word is so closely syntactically linked to the preceding one as to form a continuant of it (e.g. the second element of an adjective + noun or verb + simple adverb combination) equivalent to the

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[1] For the *ax/ax* (*xa/ax*) pattern and metrical compensation, see 1.1; for the other non-*aa/ax* patterns, see 1.2 and 1.3.

[2] For non-alliteration between /k/ and /g/, and /s/ and /ʃ/, see 1.4.

[3] See 2.2 and 2.3.

[4] For pronouns occurring at line-ending, see pp. 63-4; there is a single possible exception in which a pronoun occurs as the last stave; see the discussion on p. 64.

unstressed syllables succeeding the stressed syllable of a word.[5]

Chapter III was devoted to the study of combinations of various syntactic units—adjective + noun and verb + simple/derivative adverb—and of their distribution in the crowded and non-crowded a-verses. Based on the discussion here and in the previous chapter, I have formulated the rhythmic rules that seem to be governing the standard and crowded a-verse, which in fact show close similarity to those Duggan discerns in the b-verse: that is, just as the b-verse must have one and only one long dip before or after the first b-verse stress, the a-verse must also have at least one long dip either before or after the first of the two a-verse stresses (though it must occur, in the *crowded* a-verse, between the two stresses).[6]

In Chapter IV, I have focused on the presentation of some evidence to support my argument for the two-stave half-line theory. The *Gawain* poet exploits doublet forms such as *on/vpon folde*, *to/for to* + infinitive, and *-ly/-lych(e* adverbs and adjectives to create a long dip, which, in the crowded a-verse, serves to mark the ictus positions.[7] I have also presented evidence that, like non-alliterative poets such as Chaucer and Gower, the *Gawain* poet availed himself of inflectional and etymological *–es* when the metre required; but I have further suggested the probability that this alliterative poet also exploited these *–es* where the metre *preferred* rather than *demanded*—i.e. to produce the 'standard', or as I call it, *preferred*, rhythm of a disyllabic interval between two stresses. For these purposes, the *Gawain* poet also takes advantage of intensifiers such as *ful* and *al*.[8]

In Chapter V, the comparative study between the metre of *Sir Gawain* and that of the other control texts has shown that the *Gawain* poet and the *Erkenwald* poet were more prepared to exploit the various possibilities of the metre than the *Wars* poet and, signally, the *DT* poet. More importantly, the Cotton Nero poems, *St Erkenwald*, and *The Wars of Alexander* share the same 'grammetrical' patterns, such as a-verses involving a (non-)alliterating disyllabic non-derivative adverb taking pre-caesural stress, a-verses with an opening combination of alliterating verb + alliterating derivative adverb, with the first a-verse stress falling invariably on the second (whether verb or adverb) element, and (with syntactic inversion) pre-caesural stress on a closed-class word;[9] and *DT*

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[5] For the caesura rule, see 2.5, 2.6, and 2.8.

[6] For discussion of the standard a-verse and its rhythmic shape, see 3.3.

[7] For discussion of *to/for to* + infinitive, stock prepositional phrases, and *–ly/lych(e* adjectives and adverbs and present participle *–and(e*, see 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 respectively.

[8] For the metrical significance of *ful*, see 4.4.

[9] For the crowded a-verse involving a pre-caesural disyllabic (or trisyllabic) adverb, see 5.3; for verse-opening verb + derivative adverb combinations, 5.6; and for the crowded a-verse with the

shows the same distributional pattern of *to/for to* + infinitive as the Cotton Nero poems;[10] furthermore, with regard to the adjective + noun combinations, all the poets concerned treat them as a single metrical unit, occupying only one stave, with metrical stress falling on either combination element.[11] The shared grammatical patterns among these alliterative poets lend credence to the idea that they answered to the same rhythmic constraints as well. The validity of my a-verse rule (i.e. any a-verse must have at least one long dip before or after the first a-verse stress) has been also proved by the very low percentages among the poems concerned of a-verses which are unmetrical by my rule. All six poems present much lower figures (*SG*: 0.74%, *C*: 0,55, *P*: 0.38, *SE*: 0, etc.) than those of unmetrical b-verses (*SG*: 4.40%, *C*: 4.14, *P*: 3.39, *SE*: 0.85). Considering the fact that Duggan appears to allow about 2 percent of b-verses in the manuscripts of his first corpus to violate the rule against two long dips in the b-verse,[12] these figures support even more strongly the proposed rule for the a-verse. I have thus demonstrated the superiority of my model of a two-stave a-verse with one obligatory long dip over Duggan's hypothesis of an a-verse with the number of stresses ranging from two to three or four, and with no strict constraints with regard to the length and the number of dips.

All the poets I have studied in Chapter V obey the same set of rhythmic constraints, but their *styles* are not homogeneous. The purpose of the last chapter, therefore, was to discuss the potential of the alliterative metre for aesthetic effects that enhance and enrich the narrative. I have examined diverse ways in which the *Gawain* poet and the *Erkenwald* poet exploited various aspects of the metre such as alliteration and the last stave for their narrative purposes. The study has also suggested the need to distinguish between what is distinctive in the style of one poet and those elements common to all: the number of ictus in the two half-lines and the rhythmic constraints are the underlying principles that were strictly observed by more or less all the alliterative poets writing in the unrhymed long line;[13] and alliteration and stress, however closely they are correlated with each other, are treated as *two different systems*, and thus do not always coincide, as observed, most typically, in verses scanning *(a)ax* and *(a)xa*. In contrast with rhythm and stress patterns, alliteration is one of the aspects of the metre open to

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pre-caesural stress falling on a closed-class word, see 5.4.

[10] For *to/for to* + infinitive in *DT*, see 4.2.3.

[11] See 5.5 on the adjective + noun combination in the poems concerned.

[12] See p. 253 above.

[13] For the argument that rhythm is not metrically significant in Old English alliterative poetry, see David L. Hoover, *A New Theory of Old English Metre*, American University Studies, Series 4, English Language and Literature 14 (New York, 1985),158-62.

stylistic variations. The *aa/ax* pattern is the most frequently used pattern in *Sir Gawain*; but for this poet, the *aa/ax* pattern is not an inviolable *rule*, but simply a *norm* from which he could depart when he wished. The minimum requirement of alliteration appears to be that the line must have two alliterations which cross the caesura. The variation of alliterative patterning which seems to be permitted in *Sir Gawain* does not occur in many other poems, including *The Wars of Alexander* and *The Destruction of Troy*, in which the *aa/ax* pattern is strictly observed. However, what truly distinguishes the *Gawain* poet from these poets is his sense of alliteration: for this highly imaginative poet, alliteration is an essential instrument to highlight a word which carries considerable semantic relevance in the narrative. By means of what I call 'supplementary alliteration' (which often occurs across the line), the poet provides with compensatory alliterative emphasis a word which is contextually significant but does not join the line-internal alliteration.[14] Supplementary alliteration is often combined with his exploitation of the last stave (and the b-verse) and of redundancies to create such effects as strong foregrounding and irony.[15] Thus, I have demonstrated that the deployment of his metre by this imaginative poet is better understood by considering *sequences of lines* rather than isolated ones, and proposed that metrical analysis which considers a larger unit extending beyond a line will enable us to form a more integrated account of the alliterative metre and its functions.

The rhythms of alliterative poetry are often likened to the rhythms of the spoken language. But one must also remember that, however free they appear (particularly, in relation to sequences of identical feet, especially iambic), alliterative verse has its own underlying metrical principles: four stresses divided by a caesura into an a-verse and a b-verse, the former having at least one long dip, the latter one and only one long dip, and alliteration crossing the caesura. Furthermore, alliterative metre is, after all, a 'metre'—whose primary function is, as G. N. Leech rightly points out, to create a 'rhythmic parallelism' in sequences of poetic lines.[16] Bearing this in mind, it may be better to say that alliterative verse metre serves as a medium not so much for an accurate representation of speech rhythm as for *patterning* the spoken language. To pattern the language, iambic metre and alliterative verse metre use different sound-schemes: rhyme and alliteration. But what distinguishes the *rhythm* of the alliterative verse from the alternate stressed-unstressed rhythm of Chaucer's iambics is *the structural significance of a long dip in both half-lines.* The requirement of one long dip before or after the

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[14] For supplementary alliteration, see 6.1.
[15] For the exploitation of the last stave, b-verse, and redundancies, see 6.2, 6.3, and 6.5 respectively.
[16] G. N. Leech, *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*, 111.

initial stress of each verse is the most fundamental and crucial difference in metrical structure between the unrhymed alliterative long line and the rhymed verse with alternate rhythm. And it is these distinct rhythms and sound patterns of iambic and alliterative metre that the *Gawain* poet exploited to the full in his romance to create a unique verse form, which is unequalled, in its effect, by any other alliterative poems: that is, a verse-paragraph of unrhymed alliterative long lines, which is concluded by the bob and wheel—the five short rhymed lines. A shift from alliteration to rhyme, and from the four-beat rhythm based on long-dip intervals to the alternate stressed-unstressed rhythm serves to create a nice transition from the 'development section' of the long lines—in which major events are recounted—to the metrical 'coda', which sums up what have been told in the preceding long lines and foreshadows the following 'new movement'. Thus, the combined use of iambic and alliterative metre serves, in *Sir Gawain*, to add even greater subtlety and profundity to the narrative. In this way, the *Gawain* poet superbly demonstrates the way in which the metre is interwoven with context and meaning. And I hope this thesis has served to demonstrate the importance of a proper appreciation of the alliterative metre and its metrical rules, not only to metrical specialists, but also to interpretative and literary criticism.

Metrical Rules which Have Emerged from the Study of the Metre of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

1. CAESURA RULE:

(a) The a-verse must have a pre-caesural stress, which *always* falls on the verse-final word whether it is of open or closed class,[17] *unless* the verse-final word is so closely *syntactically* linked to the preceding one as to form a continuant of it (e.g. the second element of a nominal/verbal group[18]) equivalent to the unstressed syllables succeeding the stressed syllable of a word;

(b) Only very rarely can two words occur between the last stressed word and the caesura, but they may do so if they are so closely linked syntactically to the preceding stressed word as to be an essential part of a phrase in which the stressed word is a main component;[19]

(c) The post-stress dip may or may not be long; syllabic length is not relevant at pre-caesura.

2. THE CROWDED A-VERSE AND THE STRESS-SUBORDINATION RULE (OR 'THE SPACING RULE'):

(a) An a-verse becomes 'crowded' if and when it has three (or more) possible ictus positions. These positions are occupied by three or more open-class words, or by two open-class words and a closed-class word requiring stress at the pre-caesural

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[17] Pre-caesural stress on a closed-class word is often signalled by syntactic inversion: e.g. 'Lepe ly3tly me **to**' (292a), 'His fela3es **f**allen hym **to**' (1702a); but it is not always so: e.g. '**Þ**e lorde hym letted of **þat**' (1672a), '**Q**ueme quyssewes **þen**' (578a), 'His surkot semed hym **wel**' (1929a), 'And sayde so**þ**ly al **same**' (673a). For closed-class words requiring stress at pre-caesura, see 2.5.

[18] e.g. the second element of an adjective + noun combination: '**B**raydez out **a bry3t** *sworde*' (2319a); the second element of a verb + simple adverb: 'Bot sty**þ**ly he **s**tart *forth*' (431a); an auxiliary verb following the main verb: 'And **f**res er hit **f**alle *my3t*' (728a); a direct object for the preceding transitive verb: 'As **f**ortune wolde **f**ulsun *hom*' (99a); a pronominal vocative: 'Bot here yow **l**akked a **l**yttel, *sir*' (2366a). For full discussion of the caesura rule, see Chapter II, especially 2.5 and 2.6.

[19] e.g.: '**Sch**alkez to **sch**ote *at hym*' (1454a), 'And **p**yne yow with so **p**ouer *a mon*' (1538a); for full discussion of these verses, see 2.6.

position. Pre-caesural stress on the closed-class word is often signalled by syntactic inversion;

(b) If there is a long dip between the word that bears pre-caesural stress and the open-class word immediately preceding, the first open-class word at verse-opening has to be stress-subordinated and absorbed into the pre-stress prelude; if short, the first open-class word takes stress, stress-subordinating the second.[20]

3. THE A-VERSE RHYTHMIC RULES:

(a) Like the b-verse, the a-verse has two and only two stresses and must have one long dip: it must occur, if it is a crowded a-verse, between the two stresses; if it is a standard one, either before or after the first stress;[21]

(b) Unlike the b-verse, the a-verse (both crowded and standard) can also have a second or even a third long dip; in other words, the a-verse can have two or three long dips, while the b-verse cannot.

4. THE RULE AGAINST THE B-VERSE ENDING WITH A STRESSED PRONOUN:

Pronouns never occur as the last stave; when a pronoun + preposition occurs at line-ending, it is always the preposition that occupies the last stave, whether or not it is transposed with its pronominal complement.[22]

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[20] For full discussion on stress subordination in the crowded a-verse, see 2.2 and 2.3.
[21] For the standard a-verse and its rhythmic shape, see 3.3.
[22] e.g.: 'and selure hir ouer' (76b), 'halden be to me' (1828b); for pronouns occurring at line-ending, see pp. 63-4; there is a single possible exception in which a pronoun occurs as the last stave; see p. 64.

5. THE RULE AGAINST A FOUR-SYLLABLE DIP:

(a) B-verses with a four-syllable dip (i.e. xxxx/(x)/x *or* (x)/xxxx/x) are not metrical;[23]

(b) A-verses with a four-syllable *central* dip (e.g. xx/xxxx/x) may also be unmetrical, since the monosyllabic, rather than the disyllabic, doublet form (e.g. *on* rather than *vpon*) is consistently selected where the disyllabic counterpart would create a four-syllable central dip.[24]

6. THE SUFFIXES *–LYCH(E* AND *–AND(E*:

(a) *–lych(e* (for adverbs and adjectives) is disyllabic when it follows a monosyllabic stem, and (in the case of adjectives) when sounding of *–e* is also grammatically justified;[25]

(b) *-and(e* is disyllabic when affixed to a monosyllabic stem and followed by a one-word continuant with stress on its first syllable;[26]

7. ADJECTIVE + NOUN COMBINATIONS:

(a) The A + N combination co-occurring, in the same verse, with another lexical item which can be a candidate for stress (i.e. an open-class word or a closed-class word with phrasal stress) is treated metrically as a single unit, occupying only one stave, with stress falling on either element;

(b) All crowded a-verses involving the A + N combination follow the spacing rule: they must, like those which do not involve the combination, have a long central dip

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[23] For full discussion on the rule against a four-syllable dip in the b-verse, see 4.1, especially, on pp. 118-25.

[24] For the single instance of an a-verse with a four-syllable central dip, see p. 123. A four-syllable dip *does* occur at verse-opening, though only rarely: e.g. 'Vpon such a dere day' (92a), 'And syþen a crafty capados' (572a), 'And syþen þe brawden bryné' (580a), 'Þerfore on his schene schulde' (662a), 'And syþen with Frenkysch fare' (1116a); interestingly, a four-syllable opening dip occurs, almost always, in an a-verse with a *short central dip*; for standard a-verses with a short central dip, see 3.3.1.

[25] See 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 .

[26] See 4.3.3.

between the two stresses, one of which is carried by either one of the two combination elements, and the other by a non-combination component;[27]

(c) In a crowded a-verse involving a *pre-caesural* combination, such obligatory central long dip normally occurs between the non-combination component at verse-opening and the adjective in the combination,[28] which will, whether it alliterates or not, *always* take pre-caesural stress, so long as it is preceded by the central long dip after the non-combination component at verse-opening;[29]

(d) Alliteration *often* accompanies stress in combinations where both elements do not alliterate,[30] but it does *not always* do so.[31] Disjunction between alliteration and stress also takes place when stress on the alliterating combination element would, with the application of the spacing rule, result in a crowded a-verse with a *short* dip between the two stresses.[32]

8. ADVERB:

(a) Syllabic length is not a relevant criterion to determine the word class (open or closed) of a given adverb;[33]

(b) Monosyllabic adverbs (consistently treated as closed-class words by Duggan) are normally unstressed, but they can, in some cases, take both stress and alliteration in the crowded a-verse, even when Duggan's rules—the presence of syntactic inversion or the absence of a word from open class—are not met;[34]

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[27] e.g.: 'There gode Gawan watz grayþed' (109a), 'Is þe ȝel layk of luf' (1513a); for full discussion on A + N combinations, see 3.1.

[28] e.g.: 'Þe gordel of þe grene silke' (2035a), 'And fer ouer þe French flod' (13a).

[29] e.g.: 'Driuande to þe heȝe dece' (222a), 'He hasppez his fayre hals' (1388a); see also (d) below. For possible disjunction between alliteration and stress in A + N combinations, see 3.1.3. For J. Turville-Petre's argument for the possible disjunction in pre-caesural combinations, see pp. 86-7.

[30] e.g.: 'Bot hyȝe bonkkez and brent' (2165a), 'Whyle þe hende knyȝt at home' (1731a), 'On botounz of þe bryȝt grene' (220a); see also 3.1.3.

[31] e.g.: 'With gode cowters and gay' (583a), 'Of þe chaunce of þe grene chapel' (2399a); see also 3.1.3.

[32] e.g.: 'Þenne ho gef hym god day' (1290a); see also pp. 86.

[33] See 3.2 and 3.2.1. Duggan's metrical rules are listed on pp. 58-9.

[34] e.g.: 'And fer ouer þe French flod' (13a), 'And sayde soþly al same' (673a); see also pp. 95-8.

(c) Disyllabic adverbs (treated as consistently open-class words by Duggan) are normally stressed, but *non-derivative* adverbs—*sybben*, *forby*, *berat*, *berfore*, etc.—are treated, whether alliterating or not, as closed-class words, which will take stress *only* in the absence of two open-class words in the same verse, or when they occur at *pre-caesura*,[35] where the verse-final word (open or closed class), if not closely syntactically linked to the preceding open-class word, always bears stress as a boundary marker for the ear.

[35] e.g.: 'And *sybben* a crafty capados' (572a), '*Forby*, goude Sir Gawayn' (2118a), '*Sybben* bay slyt be slot' (1330a); see also pp. 98-100.

APPENDICES

CHAPTER IV

4.1 Prepositional phrases and their metrical significance

1) On/vpon mold

Þat euer he man *vpon molde*	merked to lyuy	(*C* 558)
3if euer þy mon *vpon molde*	merit disserued	(*C* 613)
Þere wat3 no mon *vpon molde*	of my3t as hymseluen	(*C* 1656)
Byfore alle men *vpon molde*	his mensk is þe most	(*G* 914)
I may bot mourne *vpon molde*	as may þat much louyes	(*G* 1795)
For þat þe ma3ty *on molde*	so marre þise oþer	(*C* 279)
Þat alle þe meschefe3 *on mold*	mo3t hit not sleke	(*C* 708)
Alle þe mukel mayny *on molde*[1]	for no manne3 synne3	(*C* 514)
A mensk lady *on molde*	mon may hir calle	(*G* 964)
And al tomarred in myre	whyl thou *on molde* lyuyes	(*C* 1114)

2) On/vpon fold

Þat wat3 for fylþe *vpon folde*	þat þe folk vsed	(*C* 251)
Schal no flesch *vpon folde*	by fonden on lyue	(*C* 356)
Such a fole *vpon folde*	ne freke þat hym rydes	(*G* 196)
I may be funde *vpon folde*	and foch þe such wages	(*G* 396)
And alle his afyaunce *vpon folde*	watz in þe fyue woundez	(*G* 642)
Þer schulde no freke *vpon folde*	bifore yow be chosen	(*G* 1275)
To fynde hys fere *vpon folde*	in fayth, is not eþe	(*G* 676)
Forþi oure fader *vpon folde*[2]	a foman hym wakned	(*C* 1175)

[1] Here, I follow Andrew and Waldron, who emended 'mayny-molde' (in Anderson) to 'mayny on molde'.

Þe forme worde *vpon folde* — þat þe freke meled (*G* 2373)

By forty daye3 wern faren — *on folde* no flesch styryed (*C* 403)

Fylsened euer þy fader — and *vpon folde* cheryched (*C* 1644)

And þe fayrest fryt — þat may *on folde* growe (*C* 1043)

3) On/vpon hy3e (hy3t)

Þe stif mon hym bifore — stod *vpon hy3t* (*G* 332)

Al watz hap *vpon he3e* — in hallez and chambrez (*G* 48)

Hale3 hy3e *vpon hy3t* — to herken tyþynge3 (*C* 458)

Þat haldez þe heuen *vpon hy3e* — and also yow alle (*G* 2057)

Fyrst he hewes of his hed — and *on hi3e* settez (*G* 1607)

Þat vphaldez þe heuen — and *on hy3* sittez (*G* 2442)

3e3ed 3eres-3iftes *on hi3* — 3elde hem bi hond (*G* 67)

He3e halowing *on hi3e* — with haþelez þat my3t (*G* 1602)

Þe arc houen wat3 *on hy3e* — with hurlande gote3 (*C* 413)

Gauan gripped to his ax — and gederes hit *on hy3t* (*G* 421)

4) In/upon lond

And 3if I my3t lyf *vpon londe* — lede any quyle (*G* 2058)

And preve þe ry3tly a lorde — *in londe* and in water (*P* 288)

A lowande leder of ledez — *in londe* hym wel semez (*G* 679)

In londe so hatz ben longe (*G* 36)

In londe (*G* 486)

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[2] Disyllabic adverbs such as *siþen* and *forþi* seem to be often treated as closed-class words, even when they alliterate; see 3.2.1 on pp. 93-7.

And all þe layke3 þat a lorde	a3t *in londe* schewe	(*C* 122)
Þe leuest þing for þy luf	þat I *in londe* welde	(*G* 1802)

5) On/vpon bent

On bent much baret bende		(*G* 2115)
And þe borelych burne	*on bent* þat hit kepez	(*G* 2148)

6) On/vpon lyue

And 3e ar a lede *vpon lyue*[3]	þat I wel louy	(*G* 2095)
Thenne wat3 hit list *vpon lif*	to lyþen þe houndez	(*G* 1719)
On lyue		(*G* 385)
With alle þe wo *on lyue*		(*G* 1717)
Oþer 3if my lege lorde lyst	*on lyve* me to bidde	(*P* 51)
So in a bouel of þat best	he bidez *on lyve*	(*P* 293)
For alle þe lufez *vpon lyue*	layne not þe soþe	(*G* 1786)
Þenne in worlde wat3 a wy3e	wonyande *on lyue*	(*C* 293)
Þe leue lady *on lyue*	luf hir bityde	(*G* 2054)

7) On/in erde

Forþi an aunter *in erde*	I attle to schawe	(*G* 27)
Half etayn *in erde*	I hope þat he were	(*G* 140)
Alle of ermyn *in erde*	his hode of þe same	(*G* 881)
For so watz Adam *in erde*	with one bygyled	(*G* 2416)
Olde Abraham *in erde*	one3 he sytte3	(*C* 601)
Of on þe vglokest vnhap	euer *on erd* suffred	(*C* 892)

4.2 *To/for to* + infinitive

4.2.1 *To* and *for to* + infinitive in *Sir Gawain*

1) B-verses with line-terminal *to* + infinitive

Syþen kayred to þe court	caroles to make	(43)
Þat myȝt be preued of prys	wyth penyes to bye	(79)
To joyne wyth hym in iustyng	in jopardé to lay	(97)
Þat þe lude myȝt haf leue	liflode to cach	(133)
Bot mon most I algate	mynn hym to bene	(141)
Þer watz lokyng on lenþe	þe lude to beholde	(232)
Stifest vnder stel-gere	on stedes to ryde	(260)
Ande rimed hym ful richely	and ryȝt hym to speke	(308)
Þen any burne vpon bench	hade broȝt hym to drynk	(337)
To þe grene chapel þou chose	I charge þe, to fotte	(451)
And hit watz don abof þe dece	on doser to henge	(478)
Ne no gome bot God	bi gate wyth to karp	(696)
Of a burde watz borne	oure baret to quelle	(752)
To þe heȝ lorde of þis hous	herber to craue	(812)
And mony proud mon þer presed	þat prynce to honour	(830)
To delyuer hym a leude	hym loȝly to serue	(851)
Þat such a gest as Gawan	grauntez vus to haue	(921)
Þe lorde laches hym by þe lappe	and ledez hym to sytte	(936)
Spycez, þat vnsparely men	speded hom to bryng	(979)
Þe ioye of sayn Jonez day	watz gentyle to here	(1022)
And þay busken vp bilyue	blonkkez to sadel	(1128)
Hit watz þe ladi	loflyest to beholde	(1187)
And sayned hym, as bi his saȝe	þe sauer to worthe	(1202)
And deprece your prysoun	and pray hym to ryse	(1219)
Wat chaunce so bytydez	hor cheuysaunce to chaunge	(1406)
Quere-so countenaunce is couþe	quikly to clayme	(1490)
I ne wot in worlde whederwarde	to wende hit to fynde	(1053)
Oþer elles ȝe demen me to dille	your dalyaunce to herken	(1529)
He gete þe bonk at his bak	bigynez to scrape	(1571)

[3] Cf.: 'Ther is no lede *opon lyfe* of so longe age' (*ERK* 150).

Wyth stille stollen countenaunce	þat stalworth to plese	(1659)
Þou schal cheue to þe grene chapel	þy charres to make	(1674)
Bot þe lady for luf	let not to slepe	(1733)
Þat I may mynne on þe, mon,	my mournyng to lassen	(1800)
Þenne he þulged with hir þrepe	and þoled hir to speke	(1859)
And fele þryuande þonkkez	he þrat hom to haue	(1980)
Þat þay wyth busynes had ben	aboute hym to serue	(1986)
Wyth nyȝe innoghe of þe norþe	þe naked to tene	(2002)
Vpon þat ryol red cloþe	þat ryche watz to schewe	(2036)
To byde bale withoute debate	of bronde hym to were	(2041)
And ofte chaunged his cher	þe chapel to seche	(2169)
Who stiȝtlez in þis sted	me steuen to holde	(2213)
Oþer now oþer neuer	his nedez to spede	(2216)
A denez ax new dyȝt	þe dynt with to ȝelde	(2223)
Gederez vp hys grymme tole	Gawayn to smyte	(2260)
As hit com glydande adoun	on glode hym to schende	(2266)
To acorde me with couetyse	my kynde to forsake	(2380)
Ho wayned me þis wonder	your wyttez to reue	(2459)
Þat I ne tyȝt at þis tyme	in tale to remene	(2483)
And syþen mony syker knyȝt	þat soȝt hym to haylce	(2493)
Is ryched at þe reuerence	me, renk, to mete	(2206)
Oghe to a ȝonke þynk	ȝern to schewe	(1526)
What, hit rusched and ronge	rawþe to here	(2204)

2) B-verses with line-terminal *for to* + infinitive

Þen comaunded þe kyng	þe knyȝt for to ryse	(366)
He dryues wyth droȝt	þe dust for to ryse	(523)
And let lodly þerat	þe lorde for to here	(1634)
When he acheued to þe chapel	his chek for to fech	(1857)
Fyrst he clad hym in his cloþez	þe colde for to were	(2015)
And madee hym mawgref his hed	for to mwe vtter	(1565)

Vche freke for his fee	as fallez for to haue	(1358)

3) B-verses with verse-opening *to* + infinitive

Loke, Gawan, þou be grayþe	to go as þou hettez	(448)
He sayde, ȝe ar welcum to welde	to welde as yow lykez	(835)
Þat here is, al is yowre awen	to haue at yowre wylle	(836)
Þenne lyst þe lady	to loke on þe kny3t	(941)
Ho ches thur3 þe chaunsel	to cheryche þat hende	(946)
And I schal fonde, bi my fayth,	to fylter wyth the best	(986)
So kenly fro þe kyngez kourt	to kayre al his one	(1048)
For I am sumned myselfe	to sech to a place	(1052)
I ne wot in worlde whederwarde	to wende hit to fynde	(1053)
And cum to þat merk at mydmorn	to make quat yow likez	(1073)
Let þe ladiez be fette	to lyke hem þe better	(1084)
Richen hem þe rychest	to ryde alle arayde	(1130)
And lenged þere selly longe	to loke quen he wakened	(1194)
And I schulde chepen and chose	to cheue me a lorde	(1271)
Haled hem by a lyttel hole	to haue hole sydes	(1338)
Thenne comaunded þe lorde in þat sale	to samen alle þe meny	(1372)
Boþ þe ladyes on loghe	to ly3t with her burdes	(1373)
Verayly his venysoun	to fech hym byforne	(1375)
I am at your comaundement	to kysse quen yow lykez	(1501)
Bot to take þe toruayle to myself	to trwluf expoun	(1540)
Bot þe kny3t craued leue	to kayre on þe morn	(1670)
Þe lorde hym letted of þat,	to lenge hym resteyed[4]	(1672)
Thenne watz hit list vpon lif	to lyþen þe houndez	(1719)
Þer asyngnes he a seruaunt	to sett hym in þe waye	(1971)
And vche segge as soré	to seuer with hym þere	(1987)
And blyþely bro3t to his bedde	to be at his rest	(1990)
For he hade muche on þe morn	to mynne, 3if he wolde	(1992)
For he is stiffe and sturne	and to strike louies	(2099)
And warp þe no wernyng	to worch as þe lykez	(2253)
Þerefore I eþe þe, haþel	to com to þyn aunt	(2467)

4) *To* + infinitive with sounded *–e* at b-verse opening

And syþen riche forth runnen	to reche hondeselle	(66)
And I schal ware alle my wyt	to wynne me þeder	(402)
And bi trwe tytel þerof	to telle þe wonder	(480)
Warnez hym for þe wynter	to wax ful rype	(522)
Fro þe face of þe folde	to flyȝe ful hyȝe	(524)
And folke frely hym wyth	to fonge the knyȝt	(816)
Þat Dryȝtyn for oure destyné	to deȝe watz borne	(996)
And I am wyȝe at your wylle	to worch youre hest	(1039)

5) A-verses with verse-opening *to* + infinitive

(a) standard a-verses

Þerfore to answare watz arȝe	mony aþel freke	(241)
To herber in þat hostel	whyl halyday lested	(805)
To welcum þis ilk wyȝ	as worþy hom þoȝt	(819)
To apere in his presense	prestly þat tyme	(911)
To be her seruaunt sothly	if hemself lyked	(976)
And to poynte hit ȝet I pyned	me parauenture	(1009)
Vchon to wende on his way	þat watz wyȝe stronge	(1028)
As to honour his hous	on þat hyȝe tyde	(1033)
Bot to dele yow for drurye	þat dawed bot neked	(1805)
To aspye wyth my spelle	in space quat ho wolde	(1199)
To reche to such reuerence	as ȝe reherce here	(1243)
To fylle þe same forwardez	þat þay byfore maden	(1405)
To vnlace þis bor	lufly bigynnez	(1606)
To norne on þe same note	on Nwe Ȝerez euen	(1669)
To acheue to þe chaunce	þat he hade chosen þere	(1838)

[4] The fourth stress falls on the second syllable of 'resteyed'.

(b) crowded a-verses

To wone any quyle in þis won	hit watz not myn ernde	(257)
To telle yow tenez þerof	neuer bot trifel	(547)
To sech þe gome of þe grene	as God wyl me wysse	(549)
To se þe seruyse of þat syre	þat on þat self ny3t	(751)
To lede a lortschyp in lee	of leudez ful gode	(849)
To mete þat mon at þat mere	3if I my3t last	(1061)
To hunt in holtez and heþe	at hyndez barayne	(1320)

6) A-verses with pre-caesural *to* + infinitive

A spetos sparþe to expoun	in spelle, quoso my3t	(209)
As wel schapen to schere	as scharp rasores	(213)
Ande oþer weppenes to welde	I wene wel, als	(270)
Here is no mon me to mach	for my3tez so wayke	(282)
Gawan watz glad to begynne	þose gomnez in halle	(495)
I am in tent yow to telle	þof tary hyt me schulde	(624)
Warloker to haf wro3t	had more wyt bene	(677)
If he my3t keuer to com	þe cloyster wythinne	(804)
For to charge, and to chaunge	and chose of þe best	(863)
Bot vnlyke on to loke	þo ladyes were	(950)
Mynned merthe to be made	vpon mony syþez	(982)
And wayned hom to wynne	þe worchip þerof	(984)
Þer wer gestes to go	vpon þe gray morne	(1024)
And me als fayn to falle feye	as fayly of myyn ernde	(1067)
3e han demed to do	þe dede þat I bidde	(1089)
And he ryches hym to ryse	and rapes hym sone	(1309)
Schalkez to schote at hym	schowen to þenne	(1454)
And if mon kennes yow hom to knowe	3e kest hom of your mynde	(1484)
3e ar stif innoghe to constrayne	wyth strenkþe, 3if yow lykez	(1496)
And of alle cheualry to chose	þe chef þyng alosed	(1512)
Bot 3et þe styffest to start	bi stoundez he made	(1567)
Ne þe purpose to payre	þat py3t in hir hert	(1734)
I haf none yow to norne	ne no3t wyl I take	(1823)

Hym þynk as queme hym to quelle	as quyk go hymseluen	(2109)
Þat euer ȝe fondet to fle	for freke þat I wyst	(2125)
Here ar no renkes vs to rydde	rele as vus likez	(2246)
I sende hir to asay þe	and sothly me þynkkez	(2362)
How tender hit is to entyse	teches of fylþe	(2436)

7) A-verses with *for to* + infinitive at verse-opening

For to sette þe sylueren	þat sere sewes halden	(124)
Forþi me for to fynde if þou fraystez	faylez þou neuer	(455)
For to counseyl þe kny3t	with care at her hert	(557)
For to bryng þis buurne	wyth blys into halle	(825)
For to hent hit at his honde	þe hende to seruen	(827)
For to mete wyth menske	þe mon on þe flor	(834)
For to charge, and to chaunge	and chose of þe best	(863)
For to glade Sir Gawayn	with gomnez in halle	(989)
Þat for to telle þerof	hit me tene were	(1008)
For to telle of þis teuelyng	of þis trwe kny3tez	(1514)
For to haf wonnen hym to wo3e	what-so scho þo3t ellez	(1550)
For to ferk þur3 þe fryth	and fare at þe gaynest	(1973)
Bot for to sauen himself	when suffer hym byhoued	(2040)
For to assay þe surquidré	3if hit soth were	(2457)
For to haf greued Gaynour	and gart hir to dy3e	(2460)

8) *For to* + infinitive at pre-caesura

(a) standard a-verses

Þat were to tor for to telle	of tryfles þe halue	(165)
Preue for to play wyth	in oþer pure laykez	(262)
Hit were to tore for to telle	of þe tenþe dole	(719)
And þat yow lyst for to layke	lef hit me þynkes	(1111)
And þat is ful pore for to pay	for suche prys þinges	(1945)

(b) crowded a-verses

Wayued his berde for to wayte	quo-so wolde ryse	(306)
Founded for ferde for to fle	in fourme þat þou tellez	(2130)

4.2.2 *To* and *for to* + infinitive in *Cleanness* and *Patience*

1) B-verses with line-terminal *to* + infinitive

(a) *Cleanness* (44 instances)

Now turne I þeder als tyd	þe toun to byholde	(64)
Schul neuer sitte in my sale	my soper to fele	(107)
Þe gome watȝ vngarnyst	with god men to dele	(137)
How watȝ þou hardy þis hous	for þyn vnhap to neȝe	(143)
Hopeȝ thou I be a harlot	þi erigaut to prayse	(148)
Man may mysse þe myrþe	þat much is to prayse	(189)
Ne neuer so sodenly soȝt	vnsoundely to weng	(201)
Adam inobedyent	ordaynt to blysse	(237)
I schal wayte to be war	her wrencheȝ to kepe	(292)
Bot þagh þe kyste in þe crageȝ	were closed to byde	(449)
A message fro þat meyny	hem moldeȝ to seche	(454)
Wende, worþelych wyȝt	vus woneȝ to seche	(471)
And byddeȝ hir bowe ouer þe borne	efte bonkeȝ to seche	(482)
Þat ever he man vpon molde	merked to lyvy	(558)
If þay wer farande and fre	and fayre to beholde	(607)
Prestly, at þis ilke poynte	sum polment to make	(628)
Hopeȝ ho oȝt may be harde	my hondeȝ to work	(663)
Abraham heldeȝ hem wyth	hem to conueye	(678)
And reȝtful wern and resounable	and redy þe to serve	(724)
And ioyne to her iuggement	her iuise to have	(726)
I norne yow bot for on nyȝt	neȝe me to lenge	(803)
Bot ȝet I wene þat þe wyf	hit wroth to dyspyt	(821)
Þat he ne passed þe port	þe peril to abide	(856)
For harloteȝ with his hendelayk	he hoped to chast	(860)
Who joyned þe be iostyse	oure iapeȝ to blame	(877)

Þay lest of Lotez logging	any lysoun to fynde	(887)
Blo, blubrande, and blak	vnblyþë to nez̈e	(1017)
Þat ever of synne and of smach	smart is to fele	(1019)
For what-so he towched also tyd	tourned to hele	(1099)
Þenne alle þe toles of Tolowse	moȝt tyȝt hit to kerve	(1108)
In mukel meschefes mony	þat meruayl were to here	(1164)
And broþely broȝt to Babyloyn	þer balë to suffer	(1256)
Wyth slyȝt of his ciences	his souerayn to loue	(1289)
And Baltaȝar vpon bench	was busked to sete	(1395)
And comaundes hym cofly	coferes to lauce	(1428)
Bot in temple of þe trauþe	trwly to stonde	(1490)
Nov is alle þis guere geten	glotounes to serue	(1505)
Kyppe kowpes in honde	kynge3 to serue	(1510)
Quen renkkes in þat ryche rok	rennen hit to cache	(1514)
Þaȝ þose ledes ben lewed	lettres to rede	(1596)
His sawle is ful of syence	saȝes to schawe	(1599)
Of sapyence þi sawle ful	soþes to schawe	(1626)
Þy wale rengne is walt	in weȝtes to heng	(1734)
Þat longe hade layted þat lede	his londes to strye	(1768)

(b) *Patience* (13 instances)

Ȝif me be dyȝt a destyné	duë to have	(49)
Oþer ȝif my lege lorde lyst	on lyve me to bidde	(51)
And þenne þrat moste I þole	and unþonk to mede	(55)
Þus he passes to þat port	his passage to seche	(97)
Þe see souȝed ful sore	gret selly to here	(140)
Þer watz busy overborde	balë to kest	(157)
Hatz þou, gome, no governour	ne god on to calle	(199)
Þat drof hem dryȝlych adoun	þe depë to serve	(235)
Hit may wel be þat mester were	his mantyle to wasche	(342)
Þat I schulde tee to þys toun	þi talent to preche	(416)
And farandely on a felde	he fettelez hym to bide	(435)
Bot now I se þou art sette	my solace to reve	(487)
Þat may not synne in no syt	hemselven to greve	(517)

2) B-verses with verse-opening *to* + infinitive

(a) *Cleanness* (35 instances)

And be forboden þat borȝe	to bowe þider neuer	(45)
Þat made þe mukel mangerye	to marie his here dere	(52)
And in comly quoyntis	to com to his feste	(54)
And for my hyȝeȝ hem boȝt	to bowe haf I mester	(67)
Laþez hem alle luflyly	to lenge at my fest	(81)
Of teþe tenfully togeder	to teche hym be quoynt	(160)
Vche payre by payre	to plese ayþer oþer	(338)
Kable oþer capstan	to clyppe to her ankreȝ	(418)
Oþer any sweande sayl	to seche after hauen	(420)
Of þe lenþe of Noe lyf	to lay a lel date	(425)
Haleȝ hyȝe vpon hyȝt	to herken tyþyngeȝ	(458)
Tyl any water in þe worlde	to waschë þe fayly	(548)
Weþer euer hit lyke my lorde	to lyftë such domeȝ	(717)
Þay comaunded hym cof	to cach þat he hade	(898)
Bot bes neuer so bolde	to blusch yow bihynde	(904)
And þer water may walter	to wete any erþe	(1027)
All þyse ar teches and tokenes	to trow vpon ȝet	(1049)
Þaȝ ho not derrest be demed	to delë for penies	(1118)
Þat haden hyȝt þe hyȝe God	to halde of hym ever	(1162)
And stoffed wythinne with stout men	to stalle hem þeroute	(1184)
A fote fro þat forselet	to forray no goudes	(1200)
And bede þe burne to be broȝt	to Babyloyn þe ryche	(1223)
And þere in dongoun be don	to dreȝe þer his wyrdes	(1224)
His name watȝ Nabuȝardan	to noyë þe Iues	(1236)
And if þay gruchen him his grace	to gremen his hert	(1347)
Schulde com to his court	to kyþe hym for lege	(1368)
Hit watȝ not wonte in þat wone	to wast no serges	(1489)
And of my reme þe rychest	to ryde wyth myseluen	(1572)
Sende into þe cete	to seche hym bylyue	(1615)
And wynne hym with þe worchyp	to waynë þe bote	(1616)
Þenne blynnes he not of blasfemy	on to blame þe dryȝtyn	(1661)
I am god of þe grounde	to gye as me lykes	(1663)

And phares folȝes for þose fawtes	to frayst þe trawþe[5]	(1736)
Þe kyng comaunded anon	to cleþë þat wyse	(1741)
Þat now hatȝ spyed a space	to spoylë Caldeeȝ	(1774)

(b) *Patience* (11 instances)

For hores is þe hevenryche	to holdë for ever	(14)
Mony ladde þer forþ lep	to lave and to kest	(154)
In such slaȝtes of sorȝe	to slepë so faste	(192)
With þy lastes so luþer	to lose us uchone	(198)
Hef and hale upon hyȝt	to helpen hymselven	(219)
Þat he gef hem þe grace	to greven hym never	(226)
Þaȝ hit lyttel were hym wyth	to wamel at his hert	(300)
Iwysse, a worþloker won	to welde I never keped	(464)
And syþen he warnez þe west	to waken ful softe	(469)
For he þat is to rakel	to renden his cloþez	(526)
Mot efte sitte with more unsounde	to sewe hem togeder	(527)

3) A-verses with pre-caesural *to* + infinitive

(a) *Cleanness* (18 instances)

And sende his sonde þen to say	þat þay samne schulde	(53)
And þay bignne to be glad	þat god drink haden	(123)
Þat watȝ so prest to aproche	my presens herinne	(147)
Forþy so semly to see	syþen wern none	(262)
Hit is eþë to leve	by þe last ende	(608)
Comaunded hir to be cof	and quyk at þis oneȝ	(624)
Syþen he is chosen to be chef	chyldryn fader	(684)
If any schalke to be schent	wer schowved þerinne	(1029)
Of a lady to be loued,	Loke to hir sone	(1059)
Nauþer to cout ne to kerue	with knyf ne wyth egge	(1104)
Bot al drawes to dyȝe	with doel vpon ende	(1329)
Such a mangerie to make	þe man watȝ auised	(1365)
And bede þe cetë to seche	segges þurȝout	(1559)

[5] This b-verse should be mended to 'to fayste þe trawþe' with inflectional *–e* sounded.

And makes þe mater to malt	my myndë wythinne	(1566)
Gart hym grattest to be	of gouernores alle	(1645)
With wroþe wolfes to won	and wyth wylde asses	(1676)
Þat in his hows hym to honour	were heuened of fyrst	(1714)
Entyses hym to be tene	telled up his wrake	(1808)

(b) *Patience* (11 instances)

Þen is better to abyde	þe bur umbestoundes	(7)
Oþer to ryde oþer to renne	to Rome in his ernde	(52)
Þat þay ruyt hym to rowwe	and letten þe rynk one	(216)
Þenne nas no coumfort to kever	ne counsel non oþer	(223)
Hit were a wonder to wene	ȝif holy wryt nere	(244)
And swyftely swenged hym to swepe	and his swolȝ opened	(250)
Ris, aproche þen to prech,	Lo, þe place here	(349)
For me were swetter to swelt	as swyþe, as me þynk	(427)
Why ne dyȝttez þou me to diȝe	I dure to longe	(488)
And travayledez never to tent it	þe tyme of an howre	(498)
For malyse is noȝt to mayntyne	boute mercy withinne	(523)

4) A-verses with verses-opening *to* + infinitive

(a) *Cleanness* (19 instances)

More to wyte is her wrange	þen any wylle gentyl	(76)
To lyue þer in lykyng	þe lenþe of a terme	(239)
To dryȝ her delful deystyne	and dyȝen alle samen	(400)
As to quelle alle quykes	for qued þat myȝt falle	(567)
Hem to smyte for þat smod	smartly I þenk	(711)
To wakan wedereȝ so wylde	þe wyndeȝ he calleȝ	(948)
Nauþer to cout ne to kerue	with knyf ne wyth egge	(1104)
To forfare þe falce	in þe faythe trwe	(1168)
To sytte in seruage and syte	þat sumtyme wer gentyle	(1257)
Boþe to cayre at þe kart	and þe kuy mylke	(1259)
To vouche on avayment	of his vayneglorie	(1358)
And to reche hym reuerens	and his reuel herkken	(1369)

To rose hym in his rialty — rych men soȝtten (1371)
Þat to neven þe noumbre — to much nye were (1376)
Þe lady, to lauce þat los — þat þe lorde hade (1589)
To open vch a hide þyng — of aunteres vncowþe (1600)
To teche þe of techal — þat terme þus menes (1733)
To boȝ after Baltaȝar — in borȝe and in felde (1750)
To loke on oure lofly lorde — latë bitydes (1804)

(b) *Patience* (7 instances)

Oþer to ryde oþer to renne — to Rome in his ernde (52)
To sette hym to sewrté — unsounde he hym feches (58)
And al to lyȝten þat lome — ȝif leþe wolde schape (160)
Efte to trede on þy temple — and teme to þyselven (316)
On to þrenge þerþurȝe — watz þre dayes dede (354)
To be swolȝed swyftly — wyth þe swart erþe (363)
To manace alle þise mody men — þat in þis mote dowellez (422)

4.4 The Intensifier *Ful* and its Metrical Functions

1) B-verses in which *ful* occurs as part of a medial long dip

(a) *Cleanness*

Haf halleȝ þerinne — and halkeȝ **ful** mony (321)
And he with keyes vncloses — kystes **ful** mony (1438)

To henge þe harlotes — he heȝed **ful** ofte (1584)

And syþen alle þyn oþer lymeȝ — lapped **ful** clene (175)
With koynt carneles aboue — coruen **ful** clene (1382)

With a wonder wroȝt walle	wruxeled **ful** hiȝe[6]	(1381)
Þroly þrublande in þronge	þrowen **ful** þykke	(504)
Boþe withinne and withouten	in wedeȝ **ful** bryȝt	(20)
And his clere concubynes	in cloþes **ful** bryȝt	(1400)
Þe iueles out of Ierusalem	with gemmes **ful** bryȝt	(1441)
Stad in a ryche stal	and stared **ful** bryȝt	(1506)
Þe haþel clene of his hert	hapeneȝ **ful** fayre	(27)
And þay borgounes and beres	blomeȝ **ful** fayre	(1042)
And oþer louflych lyȝt	þat lemed **ful** fayre	(1486)
Þat alle þe regioun torof	in riftes **ful** grete	(964)
For his foes in þe felde	in flokkes **ful** grete	(1767)
Þenne ran þay in on a res	on rowtes **ful** grete	(1782)
Thenne þe ludych lorde	lyked **ful** ille	(73)
Þou praysed me and my place	ful pouer and **ful** nede	(146)
Fellen fro þe fyrmament	fendeȝ **ful** blake	(221)
Þenne mourkne in þe mudde	most **ful** nede[7]	(407)
Kest to kytheȝ vncouþe	þe clowdeȝ **ful** nere	(414)
Vche hille watȝ þer hidde	with yþeȝ **ful** graye	(430)
Þe rauen raykeȝ hym forth	þat reches **ful** lyttel	(465)
Ho wyrles out on þe weder	on wyngeȝ **ful** scharpe	(475)
Þat he chysly hade cherisched	he chastysed **ful** hardee[8]	(543)
Þaȝ fast laþed hem Loth,	þay leȝen **ful** stylle	(936)
Al in smolderande smoke	smachande **ful** ille[9]	(955)
For þenne þou dryȝtyn dyspleses	with dedes **ful** sore	(1136)
Vmbewalt alle þe walles	wyth wyȝes **ful** stronge	(1181)
And couered mony a cupborde	with cloþes **ful** quite	(1440)

[6] I am assuming the non-etymological medial *–e* in 'wruxeled' (< OE. *wrixlan*) is merely graphical.
[7] This b-verse is unmetrical as it stands, lacking a long dip; with the emendation of 'most' to 'moste', however, the b-verse will become metrical.
[8] The inflectional ending '-ed' is probably syncopated on the disyllabic stem.
[9] The presence of 'ful' at this position probably indicates monosyllabic pronunciation of '-ande'. The insertion of 'ful' is needed to prevent elision between '-ande' and 'ille', which would render the verse unmetrical, as there would be no long dip.

Vche haþel to his home	hyȝes **ful** fast	(1762)
And to þe palays pryncipal	þay aproched **ful** stylle[10]	(1781)

(b) ***Patience***

For þay schal comfort encroche	in kythes **ful** mony	(18)
In his glowande glorye	and gloumbes **ful** lyttel	(94)
Þenne ascryed þay hym sckete	and asked **ful** loude	(195)
Haþeles hyȝed in haste	with ores **ful** longe	(217)
Lorde, to þe haf I cleped	in carez **ful** stronge	(305)
And to Ninivé þat naȝt	he neȝed **ful** even	(352)
Þenne þe peple pitosly	pleyned **ful** stylle	(371)
Sewed a sekke þerabof	and syked **ful** colde	(382)
Bot al schet in a schaȝe	þat schaded **ful** cole	(452)
And syþen he warnez þe west	to waken **ful** softe	(469)
Couþe I not þole bot as þou	þer þryved **ful** fewe	(521)

2) B-verses in which *ful* occurs before the head stave

B-verses in which *ful* is metrically required

(a) ***Cleanness***

Þat þus of clannesse vnclose ȝ	a **ful** cler speche	(26)
Waltes out vch walle-heued	in **ful** wode streme ȝ	(364)
And al wat ȝ gray as þe glede	with **ful** grymme clawes	(1696)
Þenne sone wat ȝ Danyel dubbed	in **ful** dere porpor	(1743)

(b) ***Patience***

And offer þe for my hele	a **ful** hol gyfte	(335)

[10] The b-verse is unmetrical as it stands, having two long dips; 'aproched' could perhaps be emended to its aphetic form, *proched*.

B-verses in which *ful* is *not* metrically required

(a) *Cleanness*

Þat þe wyȝe þat al wroȝt	**ful** wroþly bygynneȝ	(280)
Fast þe freke ferkeȝ vp	**ful** ferd at his hert	(897)
And ȝif clanly he þenne com	**ful** cortays þerafter	(1089)
Þat alle þat longed to luþer	**ful** lodly he hated	(1090)
Bot þe lettres bileued	**ful** large vpon plaster	(1549)

(b) *Patience*

Þe barrez of uche a bonk	**ful** bigly me haldes	(321)

3) Standard a-verses in which *ful* is *not* metrically required

(a) *Cleanness*

Banned hym **ful** bytterly	with bestes alle samen	(468)
Sodomas schal **ful** sodenly	synk into grounde	(910)
And enteres in **ful** ernestly	in yre of his hert	(1240)
Til he wyst **ful** wel	who wroȝt alle myȝtes	(1699)
And is funde **ful** fewe	of hit fayth dedes	(1735)

(b) *Patience*

Bot I trow **ful** tyd	overtan þat he were	(127)
Wepande **ful** wonderly[11]	alle his wrange dedes	(384)
And syþen I loked hem **ful** longe	and hem on lode hade	(504)
Arayned hym **ful** runyschly	what raysoun he hade	(191)

[11] The a-verse would be metrical without 'ful', since '-ande' would be disyllabic, being attached to the monosyllabic stem, and followed by a one-word continuant (i.e. 'runyschly') with stress on its first syllable; see the discussion in this chapter.

4) Standard a-verses in which *ful* serves to produce a metrically required long dip

(a) *Cleanness*

He ros vp **ful** radly	and ran hem to mete	(797)
Loth þenne **ful** ly3tly	loke3 hym aboute	(817)
Abraham **ful** erly[12]	wat3 vp on þe morne	(1001)
Wat3 longe and **ful** large	and euer ilych sware	(1386)

(b) *Patience*

No instances are found.

5) Standard a-verses in which *ful* serves to create the *preferred* disyllabic dip between stresses

(a) *Cleanness*

Me forþynke3 **ful** much	þat euer I mon made	(285)
Vnder askes **ful** hote	happe hem byliue	(626)
Of alle feture3 **ful** fyn[13]	and fautle3 boþe	(794)
Þat wer maydene3 **ful** meke	maryed not 3et	(815)
And mony a baroun **ful** bolde	to Babyloyn þe noble	(1372)
Þenne a dotage **ful** depe	drof to his hert	(1425)
Mony burþen **ful** bry3t	wat3 bro3t into halle	(1439)
For þer wer bassynes **ful** bry3t	of brende golde clere	(1456)
He schal be gered **ful** gaye	in gounes of porpre	(1568)
Þat is he þat **ful** ofte	hat3 heuened þy fader	(1601)
Of mony anger **ful** hote	with his holy speche	(1602)
With mony a legioun **ful** large	with ledes of armes	(1773)

With mony blame **ful** bygge[14]	a boffet peraunter	(43)
I am bot erþe **ful** euel	and vsle so blake	(747)

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[12] I take 'Abraham' to be disyllabic.

[13] Here and in lines 815a and 1456a, I am assuming the syncopation of /e/ in the inflectional ending on disyllables.

[14] Here and at 747a, I assume the sounding of etymological *–e* in 'blame' (< OFr. *blame*) and 'erþe' (< OE. *éorþe*); otherwise, these a-verses will have a short central dip.

(b) *Patience*

Ȝise, he blusched **ful** brode	þat burde hym by sure	(117)
Þat þe wawes **ful** wode	waltered so hiȝe	(142)
Tyl a swetter **ful** swyþe	hem sweȝed to bonk	(236)
Bi mony rokkez **ful** roȝe	and rydelande strondes	(254)
Þurȝ mony a regioun **ful** roȝe	þurȝ ronk of his wylle	(298)
Þen a prayer **ful** prest	þe prophete þer maked	(303)
Hit watz a ceté **ful** syde	and selly of brede	(353)
Þat on journay **ful** joynt	Jonas hym ȝede	(355)
And ho schal busch up **ful** brode	and brenne as a candel	(472)

6) Crowded a-verses involving *ful*

(a) *Cleanness*

Þe gestes gay and **ful** glad	of glam debonere	(830)

(b) *Patience*

Þe see souȝed **ful** sore	gret selly to here	(140)

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